A Pulpit Commentary

ON

Catholic Teaching

A COMPLETE EXPOSITION OF
CATHOLIC DOCTRINE, DISCIPLINE AND CULT
IN
ORIGINAL DISCOURSES
BY
PULPIT PREACHERS OF OUR OWN DAY

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✠ JOHN M. FARLEY, D.D.

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CONTENTS

		PAGE
I.	THE CALL OF ALL MEN TO RELIGION. By the Right Rev. James Bellord, D.D.	7
II.	INSUFFICIENCY OF REASON IN MATTERS OF RELIGION. By the Rev. Timothy P. Holland	16
III.	TRUE BELIEF THE WAY TO GOOD LIFE. By the Right Rev. James Bellord, D.D.	25
IV.	IS THERE A GOD? IS THERE ONLY ONE GOD? By the Rev. P. A. Halpin	34
V.	THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD. By the Rev. F. Harvey	41
VI.	THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD. By the Rev. Thomas J. Gerrard	50
VII.	THE HOLY TRINITY. By the Right Rev. Mgr. Canon John S. Vaughan	58
VIII.	OBSCURITY OF RELIGIOUS MYSTERIES. By the Right Rev. James Bellord, D.D.	68
IX.	GOD, THE FATHER AND CREATOR. By the Rev. Thomas J. Gerrard	76
X.	THE ANGELS; GOOD AND BAD ANGELS; GUARDIAN ANGELS. By the Rev. H. G. Hughes	84
XI.	THE CREATION OF MAN. By the Rev. John W. Sullivan	94
XII.	THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL. By the Rev. Dr. C. Bruehl	102
XIII.	THE SECOND PERSON; TRUE GOD. By the Rev. H. G. Hughes	113
XIV.	THE INCARNATION. By the Rev. Thomas F. Burke, C.S.P.	123
XV.	THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION. By the Rev. J. H. Stapleton	132
XVI.	CHRIST, THE TRUE MESSIAS. By the Rev. Bertrand L. Conway, C.S.P.	140
XVII.	THE PASSION AND DEATH OF OUR LORD. By the Rev. William Graham	147
XVIII.	THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION. By the Rev. William Graham	154
XIX.	THE JUDGMENT (SECOND COMING OF OUR LORD). By the Rev. William Graham	161
XX.	THE FRUITS OF THE SACRED PASSION. By the Rev. William Graham	167
XXI.	THE THIRD PERSON; TRUE GOD. By the Rev. Thomas J. Gerrard	173
XXII.	THE CHURCH. By the Rev. F. Harvey	181
XXIII.	THE INCOMPLETENESS OF REVELATION. By the Right Rev. James Bellord, D.D.	189
XXIV.	THE UNITY OF TRUE RELIGION; OR, IS ONE RELIGION AS GOOD AS ANOTHER? By the Right Rev. James Bellord, D.D.	198
XXV.	OUT OF THE CHURCH, NO SALVATION. I. By the Right Rev. James Bellord, D.D.	209
XXVI.	OUT OF THE CHURCH, NO SALVATION. II. By the Right Rev. James Bellord, D.D.	218

PAGE

XXVII. IS THE CHURCH INTOLERANT?
By the Rev. P. A. Halpin..... 228
XXVIII. THE VISIBLE HEAD OF THE CHURCH; HIS OFFICE.
By the Rev. J. H. Stapleton..... 235
XXIX. INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH AND OF THE POPE.
By the Rev. H. G. Hughes..... 243
XXX. THE PRIESTHOOD: ITS THREEFOLD OFFICE.
By the Rev. Thomas J. Gerrard..... 255
XXXI. THE PROPAGATION AND PRESERVATION OF THE CHURCH.
By the Rev. John Freeland..... 264
XXXII. SUBMISSION TO RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY.
By the Right Rev. James Bellord, D.D..... 273
XXXIII. THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.
By the Rev. Bertrand L. Conway, C.S.P..... 283
XXXIV. THE REMISSION OF SINS.
By the Rev. Dr. C. Bruehl..... 292
XXXV. THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.
By the Rev. John Freeland..... 300
XXXVI. IS THERE A HEREAFTER?
By the Right Rev. Mgr. Canon John S. Vaughan..... 310
XXXVII. HEAVEN.
By the Rev. Bertrand L. Conway, C.S.P..... 318
XXXVIII. PURGATORY.
By the Rev. John Freeland..... 326
XXXIX. HELL.
By the Right Rev. James Bellord, D.D..... 333
XL. THE DANGER OF DAMNATION.
By the Right Rev. James Bellord, D.D..... 340
XLI. PREDESTINATION AND REPROBATION.
By the Right Rev. James Bellord, D.D..... 349
XLII. DOES THE CHURCH TEACH THE END JUSTIFIES THE MEANS?
By the Rev. P. A. Halpin..... 357
XLIII. ON MIRACLES.
By the Right Rev. Mgr. Canon John S. Vaughan..... 365
XLIV. ON THE REFORMATION AND THE INQUISITION.
By the Rev. John Freeland..... 373
XLV. SECRET SOCIETIES. FORBIDDEN BOOKS.
By the Rev. John W. Sullivan..... 382
XLVI. SOCIALISM AND CHRISTIANITY.
By the Right Rev. James Bellord, D.D..... 392
XLVII. SUPERSTITION IN PRACTICES OF FAITH.
By the Rev. Thomas F. Burke, C.S.P..... 400
XLVIII. THE UNIVERSAL FITNESS OF THE CHURCH.
By the Right Rev. James Bellord, D.D..... 406
XLIX. THE CHURCH AND MODERN PROGRESS.
By the Right Rev. James Bellord, D.D..... 416
L. HUMAN RESPECT AND PERSECUTION.
By the Rev. H. G. Hughes..... 425
LI. CHRISTIANITY, THE SOURCE OF CIVILIZATION.
By the Right Rev. James Bellord, D.D..... 433
LII. CATHOLICS, THE SALT OF THE EARTH.
By the Right Rev. James Bellord, D.D..... 442
LIII. LOYALTY TO THE CHURCH.
By the Rev. P. A. Halpin..... 450

EDITOR'S NOTE

THE Encyclical of His Holiness, Pius X, in which he so strongly insists upon Catechising as one of the chief duties of the priesthood, has induced the publication of this Series. Our aim has been to prepare for the priest and for the catechist a storehouse of well-digested thought from which may be drawn inspiration as well as spiritual food.

Here are to be found assembled, carefully and forcefully developed and aptly illustrated and applied, the arguments, sanctioned by the Church and tested by experience, which form necessarily the essential part of the definition and defense of Christian doctrine.

While a carefully prepared plan has been followed throughout, we feel that the attractiveness of the Series, no less than its value, are greatly enhanced by the fact that herein one comes in touch with the efforts of many widely known writers and preachers of our day, thus assuring to the work a great variety of form, literary style, and oratorical methods.

It is expected that these volumes will be found of value not only for ready reference on points of Christian doctrine, but also as matter for spiritual reading in religious houses, and in presenting points for daily meditation, which is well recognized as a practical, if remote, method of preparation for the sacerdotal duty of catechising.

The Series will comprise four volumes, dealing in turn with *the Creed, the Commandments, the Means of Grace,* and, *the Liturgy of the Ecclesiastical Year,* and it is hoped that the arrangement of matter, as well as the completeness of treatment, will go far to meet the needs of the hour in this field.

AN EXPOSITION AND DEFENSE OF CATHOLIC TEACHING.

Vol. I. The Creed.

I. THE CALL OF ALL MEN TO RELIGION.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JAMES BELLORD, D.D.

"A certain man made a great supper and invited many. . . . And the lord said . . . compel them to come in, that my house may be filled."—Luke xiv. 16, 23.

SYNOPSIS.—The parable of the supper illustrates the call of all men to religion. Religion an essential want of the soul. This is proved (1) *by a consideration of man's make-up, his various faculties, social needs, etc.,* (2) *by the universality of religion.*

Objection.—Some men seem to live without religion. This is an abnormal condition and easily accounted for. Example—fishes in subterranean cavities without eyes. The guests were called but would not come.

Reason why men neglect the call, (1) *worldliness,* (2) *external occupations, temporal gifts. Examples—*(*a*) *Greeks,* (*b*) *Romans. The poor always responsive to the call of God.*

Conclusion.—The benefits of religion, (1) *to the soul,* (2) *to the world.*

The parable of the supper teaches us great lessons which we may apply to Our Lord's dealings with mankind in His own day and in this of ours. It treats of the call of God to all men; of the classes who are predisposed respectively to be religious and irreligious; of the motives that cause men to live without religion and to oppose it.

I. We come across many men in life who seem to be absolutely devoid of the religious sense, and to be incapable of religion. They seem to have no attraction to it, to feel no want of it. These are not a few casual individuals but large classes. Sometimes, even the majority of a community or a nation, or of those who live at a certain time, appear to be affected in this way. The suggestion that arises and is adopted by many is this: that religion is not a thing for all men, but the product of certain external conditions of inherited character, of special education, of a particular stage in the development of civilization. Many would consider that it is a sort of cultivated, or rather uncultured taste, existing in some men and not in others, like having an eye for form and color or an ear for music; and that it is neither praiseworthy nor blameworthy to have it or to be without it. This we shall now take into consideration.

Our text and many others throughout the New Testament bear

witness to the falsehood of these views. Many are called, in fact all are called in one way or other, at one time or other, to the banquet of the great King. All men are God's children, made in His image and likeness, the object of His eternal love, destined to thrones of future glory. The means and the strength required for that end are placed in the hands of all, although in different proportions. All men have access to truth and a call to holiness and salvation. The Son of God did not die for one nation, or for one class, but for all mankind. He wishes all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth; He wills not the death even of the sinner, but rather that he be converted and live. There is an order and a variety in God's calls. The Jews were called the first, and in the old times had special privileges of knowledge and divine favor beyond all other nations. In the New Testament they received the vocation to the faith before the Gentiles, but not to their exclusion. Individual men are called, sometimes from their infancy, sometimes not till old age. A man may be long in darkness, in invincible ignorance of religion, in the valley of the shadow of death. But at last the hour sounds, the summons of Christ makes itself heard to him, the light which enlighteneth every man reveals to him the path to faith and justification, which he may follow if he will.

Religion has no varying and accidental relation to the minds and consciences of mankind. It is one of the essential wants of the soul, answering to its deepest, most spontaneous, and universal cravings. Religion is one of the most prominent facts in the history of humanity, in every stage from barbarism up to the highest refinement. Each element in religion meets a corresponding want in human nature.

There is a craving in the human soul for truth, as universal as the craving for bodily nutriment. And so soon as the faculties are relieved from the strain caused by want and the struggle for daily food, the mind engages in philosophical and religious speculations, and begins to search for supernatural truth.

There is a conscience in man that bears witness to a higher law of justice and goodness, a law superior to mere expediency, or caprice, or the power which springs from brute force. Though the natural conscience be unable to originate, it never fails to pay the homage of admiration to the great supernatural virtues when they are presented to its gaze; and thus it acknowledges spontaneously the truth and universal influence of religion.

There is a natural instinct too, anterior to all reasoning, which is satisfied only by the acts and solemnities of religious worship. A law of our being makes us recognize by some inward sense the existence of a supreme, invisible power, and inspires us to express in outward forms our awe and veneration.

The social life of mankind shows that religion is a universal want, and that men have a universal aptitude for it. The progress of our race and its organization, intellectual improvement, submission to authority, the binding of many men into harmony for mutual aid, the restraint of destructive impulses—these objects have never been attained, but with the help of religious truths and religious laws. Religion has been the most important factor in every civilization of ancient and modern times, not only in Judea and in Christendom, but in Egypt, Greece, and Rome, in China, Mexico, and Hindustan.

II. Though all men require the aid of religion, and are all called to it, yet there is the patent fact that many live absolutely without it, disbelieving its revelations of truth, laughing at its laws, owning no duty to God. They do not recognize the services of religion to humanity. They do not feel any want of it, they profess to think it unreasonable, useless, even harmful to the best interests of men. The gospel of our text puts before us certain instances of this fact. The numerousness of such cases is no disproof of the truth that all men need religion and are called to it by God. It is not inconsistent with the general application of that truth, that certain men should remain for a time without being as yet called, or that they should have extinguished in themselves their natural aptitudes. There are some men in whom certain ordinary faculties are almost extinct. Custom and disuse, or disease, may destroy them. So in the lowest depths of the sea and in the subterranean rivers of great caves, fish are found that have no eyes; they have been reduced to this state through countless generations of ancestors whose eyes have gradually withered away through want of use. But they still have the rudiments of eyes, which in the course of time, under ordinary conditions, might become capable of vision. Even those who seem to be without the faculty for religion retain the rudiments of the sense somewhere in their being, and through this remnant grace can work if they are willing, and bring them to the fulness of religion. They are for the time in an unnatural and diseased state, they can not assimilate the natural food of the soul; but it does not follow that natural food at proper times is unsuitable or injurious to the average man in a

healthy state, or that those who have fallen away can not recover their normal state.

The diseased condition arises from special causes that interfere with the ordinary operations of the general law, from inherited habits, from education or the absence of it, or from earlier sins of which this is the punishment. It may even arise from the natural tendencies of one's character, and yet be an unnatural state. There are weak points in every man's character, on the moral side as on others; these determine his predominant failing, which God permits him to have in order that he may gain merit by struggling against it. Thus as some men will have a predisposition to stealing and others to intemperance, so will some be led in the direction of irreligion. Through their yielding to temptation, sin of such a kind will become a second nature to them, they will become unconscious of the law, it will be as though the law did not exist or were not adapted to their character; yet for all that, the laws of honesty, of sobriety, and of religion do not cease to be of universal obligation and of universal fitness. The low code of the society in which one man lives may make no account of thievery, and the equally low code of another society may condone or even respect irreligion; yet neither sin is changed in character, neither is the more entitled to lenient consideration, neither is the less an outrage on human nature, which requires the supernatural guidance of religion for its perfection.

The irreligion of many men is not due to their not having been called by God, nor yet to their being devoid of the faculty for hearing this voice. The guests were invited and would not come. Their condition is voluntary and is not forced upon them by the irresistible nature of things. To every man God gives the opportunity of seeing the truth, and the strength to observe the law. If the sense of religion be dulled or extinct, his intelligence and his conscience are always able to revive it, with the help of God's grace granted to men of good-will. It may indeed happen that for a time a man may labor under an involuntary incapacity for religion, that he may be in the impossibility, for the moment, of finding the truth; his ignorance may be invincible, and his irreligion honest and sincere. But such cases are probably rare. When they do occur, it is either that the moment decreed by God for enlightening and calling such a man has not arrived, or that he has been stricken with judicial blindness for having deliberately refused to follow a sufficient light. It still remains true that God calls every man to religion.

III. The parable of the king's supper brings before us one particular class of obstacles which make men neglect religion. We are told they "began all at once to make excuse. The first said to him, I have bought a farm and I must needs go out and see it; I pray thee, hold me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen and I go to try them; I pray thee, hold me excused. And another said, I have married a wife and therefore I can not come." These are all good objects enough in themselves; they are even duties; for men must of necessity buy farms and oxen and go to see them, and it is one of their obligations to marry and give in marriage. But the very best things are capable of engrossing too much our attention, and of drawing us off from other things of still greater importance, and so of becoming evil to us. So do men's external occupations interfere with the internal and spiritual work that is to be done within them. Those who live in the world must concern themselves about many things; they have domestic duties and civic duties, duties of earning and duties of spending, the duties of self-cultivation, of providing for the future, and of recreation, duties in science, duties in politics. To these they must devote their energies; it is praiseworthy for them to do so; it may even be supernatural virtue; yet in all this there may be sin.

There is moderation to be observed and due order, even in one's most sacred duties. These cease to be duties and become transgressions when they come into conflict with higher duties. We are bound to intermit them at times in order to perform our duties to God; and in this there is a sacrifice, not indeed of duties, but of something additional that might be done to advance the interests of ourselves, our family, our country. This is where excess comes in and sin. Many would be willing enough to practise religion if it never conflicted with their inclinations, pleasures, gains. But they will not sacrifice time, or convenience, or luxury, or energy, or gain, for the sake of God. They do not mind following Christ so long as it does not involve leaving anything or taking up His cross; but if they have a farm to see, or a yoke of oxen to try, or a wife to marry, they esteem these things as far more pressing than the invitations of God or the precepts of religion. Their politics, or their business, or their science, things of this world, are far too important to admit the interference of divine laws. If there is any conflict between the two things, it is religion that must yield.

The too exclusive pursuit of laudable objects has thus been the

means of turning many minds against religion. The preoccupations of real duties, rights, liberties and legitimate worldly interests, have made many men deaf to the calls of God to truth and virtue. The Jews in their misplaced zeal for their religion rejected the Saviour of the world as a blasphemer. The Greeks with their learning, refinement, and independent research after truth, could not brook the plain preaching of St. Paul, and the stern lessons of the Cross of Christ. Rome, with its wide imperial sway, its authority, its justice, its well-ordered peace, its records of splendid virtues, could not bend to the humiliations and the unselfishness of Christianity. The science of this day, with all its great services to mankind, goes out of its way and makes war on religion for maintaining that the words of God must not be called in question. The commercial world can not accept a moral code which says, Thou shalt not steal. The great and prosperous will not recognize the brotherhood of mankind and the existence of natural rights in the poor.

One and the same excuse is made for irreligion in all these cases. Religion with its strict rule of belief, its claim for obedience and self-sacrifice, is declared to be inconsistent with a man's duties, or with his prosperity, or to be unsuited to the conditions of modern life, and to the superior intelligence and lofty character of the present century. The truth is that each age and each class places itself out of harmony with religion in its own particular way, and then excuses itself by alleging that it is naturally unadapted to what it calls the antiquated forms of religion.

The highest gifts of God are open to abuse, there may be sinful excess in carrying out divinely appointed duties. Those things which God grants us to help our salvation may become obstacles to it, not indeed in themselves, but through our perverse use of them. Civil liberty, wealth, power, knowledge, refinement, each of these contains in itself the seed of danger, the germ of revolt against the law of religion. Each of these gifts of God may in its own way be used as a weapon against Him. And not only so, but there is a proportion between His gifts and the misuse of them; there is some equality between the amount we can do as God's friends for Him, and the amount which we can do against Him as His enemies. As we receive more numerous advantages from God, so are the opportunities of misusing them multiplied; as we are raised higher by God, so is the character of our opposition to Him changed; we have nobler weapons to use against Him, and this, to the eyes of men, makes our

revolt seem more respectable and even more noble. The irreligion of the simple uneducated man takes the form of grossness and brutality; the irreligion of the cultivated atheist takes the form of scientific criticism, delicate ridicule, supercilious contempt. That does not mean to say that cultivation and knowledge are of necessity antagonistic to religion, but only that these gifts of God have fallen into hands unworthy of them, and have been turned to evil uses. Such men have greater opportunities for serving God and glorifying religion, but at the same time they have greater temptations to misuse them, and a liability to greater punishment.

As men will for the most part make a bad use of the gifts they receive from God, so it follows that as a general rule we shall find the possession of temporal advantages to be associated with enmity to religion and neglect of its precepts. And it will seem as if there was an invariable, and so a natural, opposition between religion and those interests, pleasures and duties that belong to our worldly life. Hence the opposition between riches and our spiritual welfare. Wealth is one of the natural goods of life, and one of the great instruments of religious works, especially the works of corporal mercy. Riches are not evil in themselves, but only the trusting in riches. But so generally does the trusting in riches follow on the possession of riches, that Our Lord is able to say of the rich as a class that they can hardly enter into the kingdom of God. What He says of wealth is true of all other advantages when men trust in them. Mental acuteness and power may be as effective as riches in exciting pride in oneself, contempt of brethren, independence as against God; so they will operate to turn many men from religion, and they will appear as if naturally antagonistic to it. Men who set their hearts upon their material or their intellectual excellence become careless as to the possession of God, blinded to spiritual things, and in a sense incapable of religion; but yet it is true that God has invited them to His banquet, that they could have fitted themselves for it. but that they preferred to go after their farms, and their oxen, and their marriage festivities. God then passes His sentence on them: "I say to you that none of those men who were invited, shall taste of my supper."

IV. Then the master of the house sends out for the poor, the feeble, the blind and the lame, and His table is filled with guests. It was fortunate for them that they had no farms, or oxen, or domestic affairs to keep them from the banquet. They were unfortunate in a

worldly sense, but they found ample compensation. Here is the blessedness of the poor, and the simple, and the suffering, and the ignorant. God does not overwhelm any class with advantages, nor yet with disadvantages; all are favored in some respects, some in one way, some in another. It would be hard if the chief spiritual advantages went to those who were already possessed of material supremacy and mental supremacy. It can not be that any men receive some exceptional advantage, without at the same time incurring the drawbacks that belong to that advantage. The poor and the lowly are cut off not merely from the enjoyments that belong to riches and position, but from many opportunities of working for God, and from the chance of making great sacrifices for Him. They can do but little and leave but little for Him, but they are exempt from the anxieties, the temptations, the self-sufficiency, the preoccupations of other men. Religion finds fewer obstacles to its action in their souls. It seems as if they were more adapted to religion and religion to them; as if they were more visibly called than others.

Hence one of the notes and one of the reproaches of religion. In the first ages Christianity was esteemed the creed of slaves and outcasts by the lordly pagans of the empire. In later times the Catholic Church has been held contemptible for being the creed of the poor and the ignorant, the creed of women and children, and not the creed of the arrogant and the independent, the successful politician, and the speculator in millions. It is actually despised because it fulfils the prophecy of Jesus Christ, "The poor shall have the gospel preached to them;" because it is adapted to the needs of the savage and can train him to civilization; because it is the treasure of the poor, and gives him consciousness of his dignity, and affords the only comfort that can help him to bear the wrongs of civilization.

The call to religion is for all men; not only for those who are in the highways and byways, not only for the poor, but for the rich and prosperous, for the owners of farms and the buyers of oxen. While the Church is the Church of the poor, she has shown herself to be adapted to all the needs of the rich and the learned. If many of these have disobeyed the call of God it is nothing against the suitableness of religion for all, it only proves that certain ones were unworthy of possessing it. There is no discredit to religion. She is honored equally by the homage of some and by the opposition of others. It is her glory equally that she fills the hungry with good

things, and the rich she sends empty away. She gives God thanks equally for concealing His great things from the wise and prudent and for revealing them to the humble.

The Catholic religion is for all men, all nations, all times. All require it, though they will not acknowledge the need. Each has his wants, his aching pains, his dangers. Religion has the remedy for all evils whether private or public, those of individuals, and those of society, and those of humanity. For it is the communication of God to men, God's truths, God's laws, God's blessings. There is none who can dispense with these and be happy; there is none but requires the remedies, the lessons, the comforts that the Church can give; there is none who is without the vocation to her fold, none without the light to lead him there some time or other. One thing alone is required, viz.: to leave all to follow the truth and the light; this few will do; but such as do so will receive a thousand-fold even in this life and in the world to come life everlasting.

II. INSUFFICIENCY OF REASON IN MATTERS OF RELIGION.

BY THE REV. TIMOTHY P. HOLLAND.

SYNOPSIS.—I. Free-thinkers reject revelation, deny need of any, appeal to natural religion as the only religion, which, they claim, reason suffices to teach us.

II. We admit natural religion, basis of supernatural religion. It lies within the province of reason. This does not exclude possibility of a more perfect religion. That depends on sufficiency of reason to teach it.

III. In its present condition, human race can not live up to natural religion without more light than reason.

IV. It is too vague. It does not afford sufficient enthusiasm. History shows that in fact men have made a failure without revelation. Revelation no detriment to dignity of reason, but supplements and perfects it.

One of the most common and most fatal errors about religion current in the society in which our lot is cast is the error of free-thinkers.

People of their mind are against all Churches and church-going. They are too wise in their own conceit to need any instruction in religious matters. They are the self-appointed liberators of human thought from the tyranny of creeds and dogmas. Human understanding alone, they say, is able to find out the truth. They abjure all authority, all prescribed forms of religion. No outside help, no special light from above is possible or necessary; so-called revelation is an imposture debasing the dignity of human reason. Christianity is necessary neither for the guidance of the individual nor of society. "Believe in God and follow your common sense" is the only dogma of this naturalism. They point triumphantly to individuals of known integrity, so far as natural virtue goes, who profess no religious faith, and say, "Here are men who reject your religious teaching and who live better lives than many of you church-goers." They appeal to a *universal natural religion*, the religion of reason, and claim that reason tells a man all he needs to know about religion, that man is sufficient for himself. It is a doctrine attractive to superficial minds because so flattering to human vanity. It is the legitimate progeny of Protestantism which

began by rejecting the authority of the Roman Catholic Church, and now has come to rejecting Jesus Christ Himself.

There is some grain of truth in every error. Every false doctrine is a perversion, a deformity, an exaggeration of some truth. Let us see first what truth may be at bottom of this falsehood.

In the first place free-thinkers are the pretentious guardians of "natural religion." Is there such a thing as natural religion?

When we speak of religion we mean that tie, that bond of duty, which binds us to God. It may be called the sum of those moral obligations of man toward God. That God is our Creator, Supreme Master, Benefactor and Judge obliges us to pay Him the homage of adoration, obedience, gratitude, love, fear, etc. Now when we speak of religion we mean this body of relations between ourselves and almighty God.

Natural religion is distinguished from supernatural religion. The natural is the ordinary, the original; the supernatural is that which is added to the original and ordinary and is above it. The religion which is natural is the bond of duty man owes to God by the original constitution of things, viz., creation. That God is man's maker and owner requires a certain behavior of man toward God. A supernatural religion would mean something more, something added to the original arrangement, some improvement on the natural, ordinary relations with God. By nature, by the fact of creation simply we are creatures; our place is in the servants' hall, we are bound to serve Him who made us and owns us. By supernatural grace, by a new and gratuitous gift of God, by a favor we had no right to expect, God, through His only begotten Son, has given us adoption, so that we are no longer merely servants, but friends, sons, and if sons heirs also, coheirs of Jesus Christ. We are called up from the servants' hall to enjoy the intimacy of the family circle. This was not to be expected. This was a free and most gracious condescension, this is not the ordinary, natural thing, but beyond it—supernatural. Our behavior now must be correspondingly improved. There are new ties binding us to God our Father. There are new and more delicate relations between us. The old allegiance is not dissolved. We owe him all that we did in the natural, original order of things and much more. This new order of things, this new attitude toward God, this new bond of obligation to God, is supernatural religion. There is, therefore, a religion, a bond, a compact between God and man which is

natural, which is prior to and which underlies supernatural religion. It is the groundwork, the foundation of all religion. Supernatural religion is in no way at variance with it. It does not destroy it or dispense with it, but perfects it and builds upon it a nobler mansion. Christ, the messenger of this new covenant, said of the natural law, "I come not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it; not one jot or tittle of the law shall pass away till all be fulfilled." The first effect of grace is to restore and strengthen natural virtue, just as a man who comes to build a house upon a foundation does not destroy that foundation but strengthens the parts that have decayed.

To perceive these natural relations with God, to understand our duties toward Him in the natural order is within the province of human understanding. Reason is a light put into man by the author of nature to show it to him and to enable him to live by it. There is nothing in natural religion strictly above pure reason to grasp. There is nothing in its demands which are not heartily in accord with the sentiments of sane reason.

We go this far with free-thinkers therefore, that there is a universal natural religion which appeals to reason. To live up to it is our reasonable service. It is the most natural, the most reasonable, thing in the world. It is absolutely essential to human dignity and self-respect to pay to God the homage we owe Him as our Creator, our sovereign master, our constant benefactor. In other words, for a man to be religious is most natural; not to be religious is most unnatural.

This, however, is not to deny the possibility or the need of a supernatural religion. Because there is a natural order of behavior toward God arising from creation does not make it impossible for God to bestow another gift upon us requiring more perfect behavior on our part. The necessity of satisfying the demands of natural religion does not exclude the possibility or the necessity of a revealed religion. It may be that man is unable with his natural powers to fulfil it, in which case he would need help. In that case he would be most unreasonable and most negligent of natural justice did he neglect to search for a light from God to help him. He would be guilty of contempt of natural religious duties if he did not seek the necessary aid to fulfil them.

Where we separate from our adversaries is not on the question of the *existence* of natural religion, but on this question: Is man

able to know it, is it within his reach to know what it requires of him so clearly and firmly as to enable him to be faithful to it?

We are ready to admit that a few rare specimens of mankind, in whom nature was more happily compounded, have been able without the teachings of faith to reach remarkable perfection in natural virtue. The "good emperor," Marcus Aurelius, a truly noble-minded man, is pointed out as a pagan saint because of his self-mastery, his love of wisdom and his zeal for virtue; Epictetus, the patient blind slave, by his spirit of resignation to the ills of life, and Seneca, the philosopher, tutor of the Emperor Nero, who in the midst of corruption and licentiousness lived an abstemious and frugal life devoted to search of true wisdom. Such men, though uncertain of many of the most fundamental truths and failing in many natural virtues, bear yet splendid testimony that reason highly developed is a light which can discover many things relative to the mystery of human life.

We admit, too, that reason gives some light, however poor, to everybody. St. Paul reproaches the men of his time for not knowing the Creator: "The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are inexcusable. . . ."

Admitting that a small minority of men under specially favorable circumstances may attain a fair knowledge of natural religion, admitting that the rank and file of men can know faintly the most elementary truths, we maintain against rationalists and free-thinkers this—that the common run of men, or better, that the human race in *its present condition,* can not without revelation or some extra help know the truths of natural religion, can not know how to live rightly, that men can not know these things easily enough or with sufficient certitude to be able to live up to them. That is, that, taking human nature at its real worth, not exaggerating its sufficiency, it can not get along without external help. That it is not sufficient unto itself. That without more light than human understanding can furnish it can not fulfil vows to God or regulate human life rightly. That it will make a failure of life, and will fail to rise to the natural dignity of human nature, will fail to accomplish the natural end of existence.

Nor does this stultify the Creator, as implying that He left man without adequate means to attain the end assigned him. "When

God made man he made him right." His reason was sufficient once, but He is not now in his original integrity. "There hath passed away a glory from the earth." Man has gone down from the holy city of Jerusalem to the Jericho of ungodliness; he has fallen among robbers; he has been stripped of his goods and left wounded and half dead by the wayside. And while we have said that natural religion lies within the reach of reason, that does not mean that every man, however poorly developed his intellect, however rebellious his passions, is able with steady eye to perceive it. It does not mean that the *most of men* are actually capable of reading in things the natural moral law. It means simply that reason at its best is not unequal to the task of discovering the truths of natural religion. To say that a certain feat of strength is not beyond human power is not to say that every human being is equal to it, or that the most of men are, but that the best efforts of man can accomplish it.

As for individuals being able to guide themselves—how many of the great mass of men actually do any thinking for themselves on the great truths of existence? "With most people imitation, tradition and education are everything. Our beliefs are for the most part caused and determined by the community in which we happen to be born and bred, but are not based on any reasoning of ours either implicit or explicit" (Tyrrell). It is authority that moves us to believe. We believe what we are taught; we reason very little for ourselves. Nearly all our religious beliefs and moral truths come to us from others; very few have the leisure, the inclination or the industry to study out for themselves the truths of religion. To say that every man is a law unto himself, that he has only to follow what his own reason spells out for him and needs no guidance, no authority to teach him, is childish ignorance of men.

Nor could the collective wisdom of the race, the sum of knowledge which the whole race is able to accumulate as the findings of human reason suffice to guide men in the great art of living rightly.

Human reason alone is able to delineate only the dim outlines of religion. Its light is too dim. It gives twilight glimpses of the Creator too fugitive and indefinite to light the way. It gives the broad principles of duty, but its light is not strong enough to discover the detailed application of these. It makes us feel in a general way the necessity of doing God's will, but it does not declare what that will is and how to do it. "The choices of life are definite

things, and the rule to guide our choice must also be definite. It can tell us that all vice is to be shunned, but it does not tell us whether this or that particular thing is a vice. Natural religion is a religion of dreams, its doctrines are vague as dreams; like dreams their features are forever changing. It can never rule men; it has never ruled them. It excites more longings in men than it can satisfy. It ever cries for more. It is an alluring voice heard far off through the fog calling to them, 'Follow me,' but it leaves them in the fog to pick their own way out toward it over rocks and streams and pitfalls which they can but half distinguish, among which they may be killed or crippled and are almost certain to grow bewildered" (Mallock).

This vagueness strips religion of all enthusiasm. It is too uncertain to be urgent. Religion is sacrifice—"not my will but thine be done." But men are not going to make sacrifices for shadows or specters. God is the spring of action. The cold call of duty is weak against the selfishness of our nature. The personality of God is too remote. The Incarnation by bringing God close to us has transformed duty into the pleadings of infinite love and warmed men's hearts with love and enthusiasm. Reason leaves men in a darkness, a coldness, a lassitude, a lethargy rightly described by the author of Revelation, "the darkness of the shadow of the valley of death."

The right way to find out how well men can shift for themselves in matters of the soul without external help is to see how they actually have behaved without it. If we can find a people for a long time without the light of true revelation, the success that was theirs is an indication of the possibilities of natural guidance.

Our adversaries point out to us good virtuous men all around us who do not believe in revealed truth, and they say, These are as enlightened and more virtuous than many Christian believers. They are as just, as temperate, as kind and as benevolent. It is true there are such people among us, whose lives are a reproach to many a Catholic in many ways; but this proves nothing against the usefulness or need of revelation. These people are actually, though perhaps unconsciously, molded in their beliefs by truths revealed. There is a whole body of beliefs and doctrines the common stock of society which one might think to be these findings of natural reason, but which in reality are but the traditions of a society that has been for centuries in the main a Christian society. Every

man's thought is colored by the environments in which he lives. No man living in Christian society, unless his mind has been debauched by immoral living, can strip himself of the legacy of truth which is his by heredity, of the customs and general tone of the society in which he lives. It is not fair, then, to take an unbeliever from the midst of Christian influences as an example of what man would be without the aid of a revealed religion, for such a one is not without its aid, and though he may not be conscious of it, many of the principles of life which he possesses are his, thanks to a Christian social influence, and he would never have attained to them by his own individual powers of discernment. "Noble-minded disciples of naturalism are parasites of a believing society and would die without it" (Balfour).

Let us go back to the pagan world before the time when paganism began to be influenced by contact with the Gospel. Let us take the very best of these peoples, the Greeks and Romans, who were most highly cultured and boasted the wisdom of their philosophers. Indeed, even here we are not sure we are eliminating all revelation. The Jews, scattered as they were throughout the world, doubtless acted in some degree as a corrective to the perverted notions of the pagans. And we are not sure but God may have vouchsafed some kind of light to these children of darkness, which was authenticated.

Yet in spite of these possible helps, in what a deplorable muddle do we find men concerning the truths of natural religion!

To begin with, they had most deformed notions about the nature of God. Polytheism, dualism and idolatry flourished universally; stars, plants, animals, wooden and metal idols were adored as gods, as is still the case among barbarous tribes. Sanctity or purity was not an attribute of these gods. The most revolting vices and crimes were attributed to them—pride, envy, jealousy, murder, incest, rape. Every human passion was deified and served as a patron to those addicted to such a vice.

Such being the notions concerning the being of the Deity, naturally the notions of the worship pleasing to it were equally distorted. Human sacrifices were offered to placate the gods and most obscene orgies were perpetrated in their honor, the gods not being worthy of pure love, but hideous beings to be placated. No one ever thought of loving them. "Who ever thought of giving thanks to the gods that he was a good man?" said Cicero. "It were absurd," said Aristotle, "for any one to say he loved Jupiter."

Likewise distorted and debased was the idea of the dignity of man. Charity was little known in the sense in which we know it. The reason for this was that the corner-stone truth that gives value to dignity in man was ignored, viz., the immortality of the soul.

The Stoic school taught that souls, being substantially an evaporation of blood, continued to exist a certain time after death in a separate state of being, especially in the case of wise men, but could only exist till the next general conflagration of the world.

Cicero hesitated. After writing a book on the immortality of the soul he writes: "I have evolved this book, but I know not while I read it how to assent to it. When I put down the book and begin to think on the immortality of souls, all this assent falls to the ground."

Virgil, Ovid and Horace sought protection against the comfortless thought of an inevitable descent into the gloomy night of the nether world and into an eternal sleep, in the enjoyment of the present moment.

"There is nothing after death, and death is nothing; you will then be with the unborn," was the common saying.

The tombstones over the dead frequently referred to the transitoriness of everything human, but always for the sole purpose of enforcing the moral that as much enjoyment as possible should be won and, as it were, pressed out of the fleeting moments.

"What I have eaten and drunk, that I take with me," says one of them; "what I have left behind me, that have I forfeited."

From such false principles concerning God and man, it is not difficult to conjecture what depraved rules of morals were deduced. The myths of all kinds of immoral escapades on the part of the gods were made the excuse for similar crimes in men. The baseness and degradation of pagans is depicted in the Epistle to the Romans, in these words: "They changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man and to birds and fourfooted beasts and creeping things. Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonor their own bodies. They changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator . . . for this cause also God gave them up unto vile affections. . . . Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things that are not convenient, being filled with all unrighteousness,

fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud boasters, inventors of evil things, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful."

Such was the revolting condition of the pagan world under the sole guidance of what free-thinkers proclaim the only guide—natural reason. Without the light of revelation to guide them these are the follies men fell into. They changed the likeness of God into the image of a creature; they lost the dignity of man and floundered in the filth of immorality. The various forms of religion—whose number was legion—were all the devices of man. But the fact that the world so universally believed them to be revealed shows that men felt the need of a light from above. They consulted oracles, they examined the entrails of victims to know the will of the gods. They in many ways attested what their philosophers taught, that the great enigmas of life can only be solved by the aid of a special light from heaven; that a light superior to that of reason is necessary to answer its own demands. If the cults he practised did not actually give the help needed they show that man realizes how insufficient he is for himself, and it was but reasonable to lift his eyes to heaven for help.

These free-thinkers would lead us back into the degradation of paganism. They would take away from us the "excellent light of the Gospel," which shows us the way and the truth, following which we shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. They would extinguish that fire of divine love, of zeal, for the commands of God our Creator, which Jesus Christ came to kindle upon earth. They would reopen the graves of the horrid lusts of paganism and let them loose upon men.

Is their motive true zeal for the right use of reason, true love for the real dignity of man, or are these free-thinkers not rather of a piece with those pagans of whom the Epistle to the Romans speaks?

"Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness . . . unto vile affections . . . to that which is against nature. . . . And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not becoming."

III. TRUE BELIEF THE WAY TO GOOD LIFE.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JAMES BELLORD, D.D.

"Without faith it is impossible to please God."—Heb. xi. 6.

SYNOPSIS.—Faith necessary for good life. Good life necessary for faith. The relation between the two. The world's estimate of the necessity of faith, St. Paul's answer to that estimate. Great difference in the life of one animated by faith and one not animated. Faith gives supernatural quality to man's life, and even ennobles the natural in man. Many virtues inculcated by faith. The religious motive the only one that leads men to good lives. The testimony of experience as to the value of faith. Faith rejected by many. The evil effects of the absence of faith.

I. Faith and works—true belief and good life—these are two things absolutely necessary for the spiritual perfection of man and for his salvation. They are the two wings by which man rises towards God. Each one in itself is good and necessary; either, by itself, is absolutely insufficient. Faith alone will not save our souls; goodness of life by itself will not save us. Faith is exalted by the apostle as an essential element of holiness, yet if it have not charity, that is, the love of God expressed in good life, or the keeping of the commandments, it is but an empty sound—a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. On the other hand a man may have all human excellence, yet without faith it is impossible that he should please God.

The two things are necessary to salvation; and also they are necessary each to the existence of the other. (1) Faith is the principle, the source, the motive of good life. Good life in its highest expression is impossible without faith. (2) Faith, on the other hand, though not exactly impossible without good life, is dead and useless without it. Good works are often the source and origin of faith; they are the evidence of its life and vigor; they are the nutrition and support of faith. (3) The two things together constitute true religion; they embrace the whole spiritual life of man; they give him here rest and peace, they bring him hereafter to eternal life. We shall consider to-day the fact that faith is essential to good life.

II. This is a truth that we need carefully to consider and maintain and act upon; for it is a truth that has been almost totally lost sight of by a great multitude of men. The opposite of this truth has be-

come almost a maxim of human life outside the Catholic Church; it is continually expressed in different forms. Thus we hear it said: "It does not matter what a man believes so long as he does his duty to his fellowmen." And there is something of this kind: "His faith is good whose life is in the right." And again: "God will not condemn any man for a mere matter of opinion;" a statement which in itself is quite true, only it is so used as to convey a most pernicious falsehood; for revealed truths are not mere opinions. The fact is that the great virtue of faith has dropped out of men's comprehension entirely; the word remains, but the ideas it expresses are lost. Faith implies a body of truth revealed by God, an accurate knowledge of that truth by men, and a firm adherence of the intellect to it, as being the highest certainty; it is the first duty of religion to ascertain and embrace this truth. Such is the notion of faith that has prevailed from the days of Moses to the days of the apostles, and down to our times in the largest united religious body, the Catholic Church. During the last couple of centuries or so, a number of sects have sprung up, who have lost the idea of faith, of certainty, of duty in the matter of belief, and who know of nothing higher than mere religious opinion, or persuasion, or taste. Of course if faith is nothing more than this or that man's temporary liking for this or that doctrine, it is a matter of the smallest consequence. Beginning with this false principle it naturally follows that men will attach all importance to morality and none to true belief; and that in their uncertainty as to the relations of man with God, they will neglect these, and think more of the relations of man to his fellowmen. Then they come to think that there is no such thing as absolute religious truth; they do not take any trouble in seeking it; and when they do commence to see such truth, they have no conception of their rigorous obligation to follow it up and to embrace it.

III. The answer to all this is contained in the words of St. Paul: "Without faith it is impossible to please God." Without faith there is no really good life—no life such as God accounts good in view of a supernatural reward. Without faith all human goodness is unreal, deceptive, and useless, except in the natural order. Without faith it is impossible for our ideas, our aims, our actions to rise to that elevation and assume that divine character which God requires in them. The character of actions depends on the being who does them, and upon his ideas and intentions. An irrational animal eats greedily, seizes on all it can without regard to ownership, injures

the one who approaches it for its own good; these actions are not immoral, dishonest, ungrateful; they do not evidence a depraved character, or excite the contempt we should feel for a man who did such things. The man's intelligence and sense of a moral law cause the same acts, when done by him, to bear a very different aspect. So when a man lives for himself alone, his economies, or his expenditure, or his toil, have a very different character from what they would have if he were laboring for the support of others dependent on him. In like manner he who believes in God, who loves God with all his heart, and seeks to please Him and attain to future perfection in Him, may have the same occupation in life as a man who believes in and loves nothing beyond himself and this world. The lives and actions of these two men may coincide to a great extent, there may be little difference visible to one who sees only certain parts of their lives; yet in their intentions and motives, and in the estimation of God, there will be an infinite distance between the acts of the one and the same acts of the other. Even the same acts of virtue will be different in them: in the one man they are natural and of this world, proceeding only from temperament or policy; in the other they are characterized by his faith and by his love of God, and are done under the influence of grace; they are supernatural and divine.

It is in this sense that good life is impossible without faith. It is not to be said that all the actions of a man without faith are sins. It is not to be said that his life is devoid of all goodness, or that he will receive no recompense from God. On the contrary, there is more or less natural good in every man, all are capable of doing some good deeds, some men of exceptional endowments or opportunities may lead lives useful to others and admired by all, they may be a model even to those who have the faith. This we have no wish to deny. We admit also that in the external manifestations of goodness there may be cases where there will be little to choose between the man with faith and the man without faith. What we say is this, that the goodness in each case proceeds from a different principle, and is of a different character. In the one instance it is supernatural, it earns an eternal reward; in the other, it is merely natural in origin and in aim, its reward is a merely natural and temporal one, and so far it is unreal.

A little later we shall see that this kind of good life is not unconnected with faith. It indirectly originates in faith, and it often becomes the source of it, and so proves the second of our pro-

positions: that good life conduces to true belief. Good life alone does not lead directly to heaven, but it puts men on the way to those graces which will ultimately bring them there.

IV. We go now a step further, and we say, that faith is not only necessary in order to give our actions that supernatural quality which makes them pleasing to God, but also faith is necessary to enable men to perform the highest class of good actions and lead lives of high excellence. We may occasionally find men of great goodness who have not the faith, or at least have not a complete knowledge of religious truths; but their highest goodness is not so complete, so high, so consistent, or so common, as that goodness which is inspired by true Christianity. It is exceptional and rare, it is partial and variable, it is defective generally in some important parts. There are whole classes of exalted virtues which are not only beyond the reach, but beyond the conception of those who have not the faith of Christ. Such for instance are chastity, courageous endurance of the trials of life, heroic self-sacrifice, the surrender of one's own will, possessions, comforts, life itself, for the love of God and one's brethren, confidence in God with peace and contentment that surpasseth all knowledge. Such again are mortification and rigor towards self, patience under calumny and injury, the forgiveness of injuries, prayer and absorption in God. These and many other such things are spoken of by the world as noble, but impracticable, ideals; the close imitation of Our Lord Jesus Christ as commanded in the New Testament is regarded, even by some who profess to be Christians and to believe the Sacred Scriptures, as injudicious and obsolete. Yet such virtues are of common, every-day occurrence, not only in the cloister, but in every nation, community, family even, where the Catholic system is received in its entirety. Even the testimony of our enemies is most abundant as to the extraordinary self-devotion of priests and missionaries, the purity of Catholic districts, the industry, the simple lives, the tranquil happiness of truly Catholic populations, the indefinable charm which the Catholic religion develops in its faithful children. And all this is the fruit of true belief with its concomitant. Faith is first, and from it are derived the grace of God, the indwelling of His spirit, the Sacraments, the examples, the devotions, the feelings, that form the perfect Christian character.

The highest results in the way of good life are attainable only under the influence of true and complete belief in divine truths. Strong belief in a religion, whether incomplete and true as in the

case of the Jews of old, or incomplete and false as in the case of Paganism, Mohammedanism, and Protestantism, has produced greater effects on men's lives than any other motive outside religion. It has engendered by turns a ruthless fanaticism, a violent though temporary enthusiasm, great organizing and subduing forces, great devotion, courage, generosity. Nay, further, there have been a few exceptional cases in those religions of men who, if regarded in some aspects only, and not scrutinized too closely, might almost seem worthy to rank among the Catholic saints. So great is the power of the religious idea even in its lowest manifestations. But the noblest type of good living, the really God-like character, is the creation only of that Church to which the true and complete revelation of Christ was committed. Under the Catholic system, and nowhere else, we find virtue the most superhuman, yet of ordinary occurrence; influence most powerful yet never tyrannical, absolute devotion without any unreal and transient enthusiasm, austerity without fanaticism, profound unworldliness united with the fullest human sympathy, burning zeal but with no touch of bigotry, strength that is not violence, calm that is not apathy. Nowhere else do we find fullness of belief, and consistency of doctrines, and perfect certainty; nowhere else do we find so many and so exalted Christian lives.

V. But we may go further still and say, that without faith, the natural man can not develop the capacities that are within him; and that even the merely human, natural, and worldly virtues will wither up and die, unless they are nourished by the knowledge of supernatural truth. Without faith it is impossible to lead such good lives as will please God even in that lower degree in which a natural life may be said to please God. The fall of the human race impaired the natural as well as the supernatural powers of men; and it is, as an almost universal rule, beyond the power of the man unaided by faith to attain to that ideal of goodness which worldly men consider possible and desirable. Even that standard, though it is lowered by the omission of all that is exalted and difficult in Christianity, is still too high for the average unbeliever. A considerable number may have attained to a high degree of respectable life without faith, but only because they have inherited an exceptional character refined and cultivated through generations of believing ancestors, or because they have had educational advantages which can never become common to the bulk of men.

Apart from religious motives there are not many influences to

make men practise the self-restraint necessary for good life. Comparatively few are endowed naturally with a noble or lofty character; few also are influenced by that merely human but still high law of *noblesse oblige*. Those who have been imbued with a strict sense of honor, or with pride in the reputation of their family, or who have been disciplined by the study of art or science or literature, or who have lived in good society, acquire many admirable natural virtues. But these privileges belong only to a few, and their influence on the character is merely superficial.

Something more than natural and worldly inducements are required to make men practise those kinds of goodness which the world values, and which are necessary for the comfort of others and convenience of human society. Even those virtues are difficult and rare. Honesty, truthfulness, benevolence, disinterestedness, devotion to the general weal, good-nature, civility—these are not so easy as to come naturally to every man who has no faith. But unscrupulousness, hardness, selfishness, spite, vindictiveness, self-indulgence—these are what come easiest to men who have not known the discipline, the restraints, the hopes, and the aids of religious belief. What is there outside religion to induce a man to do that which is difficult rather than what is easy, to do violence to his inclinations rather than to gratify them, to prefer the interests of another man, another country, another age, to his own? The great motive-forces outside religion are power, possessions, and pleasure; the pursuit of these does not require the assistance of the natural virtues, the enjoyment of them does not conduce to the growth of virtue. No force is able to cope with selfishness and its train of destructive vices except the modest but all-conquering power of faith animated by charity.

It is all very well for unbelievers, and for those bewildered by the contradictions of heresy to say, that deeds are more important than opinions, and that belief or unbelief matters little if only a man's life is good. Where can they find widespread and consistent goodness of life except in conjunction with faith? Take any simple, pious, believing community of former or present times—people who believe in God present and ruling them, as though they saw Him with their bodily eyes, who obey His law and strive to save their souls. Such a people may be cultivated or comparatively ignorant, comfortable in circumstances or struggling against poverty, but there you will find a virtuous people, free from crime, contented

and peaceful, needing few laws, no police, no jails. Look at any country where faith is on the decline and religion is dying out, and there you will also note the extinction of natural virtues, a growing brutality of manners, an alarming increase of immorality, violence and fraud. The greater knowledge and power that civilization has begotten only serve to organize crime on a larger scale and to render law powerless. The slow and clumsy advances of legislation are unable to keep pace with the quick ingenuity of crime, which so is enabled to work destruction almost with impunity.

The effect of faith in developing the ordinary civic virtues is noted by Tertullian in the early ages of Christianity. Although persecuted by the civil power, and alienated from the general life of their fellow citizens, the new Christians were distinguished for their fidelity to their public duties. Although calumniated and despised, it was recognized by the pagans that Christians were the bravest soldiers of the empire, and that as the faith spread, the public revenues raised by the tax-collectors steadily increased. So it is always. The habits of mind that supernatural belief produces are precisely those which conduce most to civil order; such as peaceableness, respect for authority, beneficence to all men, obedience and self-sacrifice.

VI. Hitherto we have been considering the absence of faith or the imperfection of faith in a general way, without taking account of its being deliberate or not. A few remarks may be made as to those cases where men deliberately reject the truth, or fail to inquire into it when they feel the impulse to do so.

This sort of thing is not very uncommon. Truth is often unwelcome and brings tribulation, especially when we find ourselves in the midst of men who are committed to its opposite. It is more to our worldly interest, and it is far easier, to go with the multitude than to oppose them. This is particularly true as regards religious belief; our blessed Lord foretold it to all those who desire to be His followers: "In the world you shall have tribulation. Blessed are you when men shall persecute and calumniate you." It is only to be expected that many should shrink from sacrificing their interests and incurring odium, and should prefer the secret sin of insincerity, which disgraces them only before God and their own conscience. There are many who know the truth but will not embrace it for fear of consequences; they may lose their position, the means of support, their home, public esteem, the love of their relatives and friends; they will have to meet coldness, suspicion, hatred, poverty; and their

courage is not equal to the sacrifice. There are others who have a glimpse of the truth, and who know that if they inquire further they will find it; but they dread the knowledge, they wish to remain in ignorance and avoid the conflict between conscience and interest. They will not pursue the inquiry that will change their doubt about truth into certainty; and they delude themselves with the idea that they may safely shut their eyes to the light so long as it is dim and distant, and that a deliberately chosen ignorance will save them both from the temporal disadvantages of embracing the truth and from the spiritual penalties of rejecting it. The sin in either case is much the same. Such persons are sometimes tempted to think that they can counterbalance the disobedience in one matter by additional fervor in others. They have sinned against faith, but they will be more diligent in works of charity. They have refused to serve God in that religion which He has pointed out to them; but they will worship Him with more fervor and regularity in that form out of which He is calling them. This supposed service of God is disobedience and sin. Of what avail is it all? What is the use of their prayers and good works? The apostle answers: "Without faith it is impossible to please God." The service of the intellect, the submission to the obedience of faith, is the highest offering we can make to God. To withhold that is to take back for ourselves the best part of the sacrifice, it is to commit that "robbery in the holocaust" which God detests. The violation of the one commandment makes a man guilty of all. One grave sin is a completed decisive severance of the soul from God, and all other good works are devoid of the supernatural impulse, are dead and useless.

VII. The natural effect of the Catholic faith is to give birth to a good life. There is a logical force, a consistency in that faith, which satisfies the most exacting intellect; there is a most certain assurance produced by it, so that Catholics are ready to stake their all upon it. In no other form of religion can we find such multitudes who are ready to sacrifice present and visible interests for the sake of the future and unseen. This security enables men to accept a lofty and difficult law. As faith gives the Catholic a more adequate conception of God, so it makes it easier for him to love God. God is not to him an abstraction, as to so many other men, but He is a living personality, really present, in actual communication with men. Hence springs that love of God which is the most powerful and most lasting of all forces in this world.

Faith leads on to other aids of good life. It sets forth the example of Our Lord Jesus Christ, His most blessed mother, and His saints. Faith places at our disposal the solemnities of worship and the seven Sacraments, with all their numerous effects on the intellect and imagination, on the body, the mind, the heart; and above all with the out-pouring of grace and of the Holy Spirit into us. Holiness of life is the due and natural effect of all these influences.

But faith is very far from having these effects universally. There must of necessity be many who receive the grace of God in vain, in whom His efficacy is quenched, whose obstinacy prevails even against the Omnipotent. For such there is no excuse. They are the worst enemies of God; His severest anger and punishment are for them. So potent an influence as faith must have great consequences and can not fail of its full effect. But it has two alternative effects. The first and proper one is holiness of life. But if it is prevented violently from this action, it still is not nullified; it is not made simply as though it had never been; but it bursts forth with another and destructive force upon the sinner who has misused it. It becomes a curse to him and a sentence of condemnation. His faith supplies him with the materials of infidelity, and he falls to a lower depth of irreligion. He has so outraged the power of observing the higher law of holiness, that not enough remains to help him to observe the lower precepts of mere natural morality. The higher he has been, the lower he falls; and his degraded life, which seems to argue incapacity in the Catholic faith to command his intellect and rule his passions, only proves the power of that faith, in that such deep destruction follows, where it is not allowed to find its natural outlet in sanctifying the lives of men.

IV. IS THERE A GOD? IS THERE ONLY ONE GOD?

BY THE REV. P. A. HALPIN.

SYNOPSIS.—I. The significance of the question. It implies something shocking and untrue.

II. God's existence is a fact which appeals to our reason, as is attested by the universal consent of mankind, universal in space and time, which consent is based on reason, which affirms the relation between effect and cause.

III. & IV. Scripture teaches it and so does the Church.

V. That there is only one God flows from the nature of an infinite Being.

These two questions are identical in the sense that the second follows indisputably from the first. Whoso admits one Supreme Being must grant that two first and highest entities are inadmissible. For the sake of clearness the significance of the questions will be emphasized and a reply will be given in the terms of reason and revelation.

I. *The Question.* It may be skeptical or querulous, or blasphemous. Has any human being made this query seriously? It is said in Scripture, "The fool said in his heart: there is no God" (Ps. lii). The denial of God's existence is, to say the least, startling. No one ever hears it without a shock. It seems to blot out sun and stars and everything bright in the world. It leaves behind it a gaping chasm as it creates before it unfathomable gloom. Perhaps honesty of declaration, if pushed to its most accurate expression, would reveal that in no man's mind has there been absolute negation of the existence of God. The averment of the prophet may be admitted in the sense that the one who would make such a declaration is for the moment under the spell of some strong feeling which paralyzes his intellect and places him in the category of the momentarily insane. Only the Searcher of Hearts knows whether the one who utters the phrase which obliterates God is speaking the settled conviction of his mind or is giving vent to a doubt, or under the pressure of some weighty woe asks in his despair, Is there a God, or is so debased that he wishes for himself every license, and therefore would overthrow God in his frenzied railings, overthrow

God and His law and be unto himself his own law and his own god.

The question might be put to all the atheists who have figured in history or have lived since the beginning, whether, while they denied with their lips, they believed in their hearts or were convinced in their minds that such was the fact. What would an honest answer tell us? Many, very, very many, who have studied this matter, are of the opinion that the answer of this horde of unbelievers, if honest, would be that somewhere or other in their nature there was heard a voice which could not be quelled and which gave the lie to all their spoken or written denials. It must be remembered that bravado is rampant everywhere and that there is no boldness so fierce as that of those who have invaded, with ruthless spirit, with mind iconoclastic, the sacred precincts of religious truth. Some have doubted this primal verity for a time, and at last shaken it off as something pestilential. Their name is legion and the history of Christianity is full of distinguished individuals for whom skepticism was a nightmare, clouding mind and corrupting heart, until on some blessed day, or rather in some blessed moment, the dawn broke and the specter fled and God was there. The spirit of impatience in trial, so frequent in life's struggles, and to which we are all so prone when harassed by care, or baffled in our efforts or our ambition, when loved ones suffer or are taken from us, tortures us sometimes into expressions or thoughts skeptical in their nature. Such expressions it would be unfair to stigmatize as blasphemous or skeptical. They are rather the outpouring of wonderment as to the ways of Divine Providence than a denial of His existence. They are murmurings merely upspringing from wounded and sore hearts.

The more closely one looks into the matter the more one is inclined to admit that the opinion negative of the Divinity has its source rather in license of living, or pride of intellect begetting blasphemy. There is no doubt that there are those who live as if God was not, and their mental attitude is one of wilful oblivion and their atheism is more practical than theoretical. Taking the question to be an affirmation we can not but pronounce it horrible, blasphemous, ignominious. Not in all the languages of the world is there an averment so universally revolting. We fear that to utter it there is required an effrontery and a corruption which can proceed only from a mind given over to pride or from a heart abandoned

to every wicked desire and perhaps to the most grasping greed and the most abominable lusts. The voice that speaks it is the voice of one dead to the strongest instincts of nature, of one who sets himself in opposition to his whole environment. Every tongue —the tongue of man, all the tongues of earth, sea and sky—proclaims the existence of God. The tongue of the atheist alone emits the only discordant note in this grand chorus of creatures hymning the praises of the omnipotent Creator of the universe. "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy face? If I take my wings early in the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there also shall thy hand lead me and thy right hand shall hold me" (Ps. xxxviii). What sphere, what land, or what depth or what height shall the atheist and the scoffer inhabit to be screened from the face of God?

To state that God does not exist is to state a colossal falsehood which is branded both by reason and revelation.

II. Reason can not admit it, because it finds nowhere in all the attacks of unbelief a single solid argument in its favor, while it everywhere discovers proofs which corroborate the contradictory assertion. One grows weary of defending the glorious truths of Christianity against enemies who advance no new difficulties, but persistently repeat those which have been urged since the beginning. Let us just as defiantly deny the atheistic proposition as it is boldly put forth. Let us ask them to prove there is no God. Have they ever proved it? Have they ever, with all their ingenuity, framed an argument of which the propositions are undeniable and from which the conclusion, God does not exist, is inevitable? All they have alleged amounts merely to a slender "perhaps" hanging on the gossamer thread of unreasonable doubt. Have they ever propagated their irreligion, that is, so propagated it as to plant in minds a conviction immovable or to touch hearts with a persuasion which remains in spite of threats, persecution and death?

Until more forcible proofs are forthcoming the belief in God's existence will be an inalienable possession in the domain of thought. This is only a negative reply, but positive answers are not wanting.

God is a word we have used since our childhood. Not only we have heard and used it, but it had moreover a meaning for us. Perhaps we grasped its meaning more readily than the signification of anything else proposed to us. What does this fact prove? It proves that the idea of a Supreme Being is natural to the human

soul, that this voice of nature is sincere and unalterable. "An opinion," says a pagan philosopher, "which has in its favor the positive testimony of the human race can not but be true." "What all men," writes another eminent heathen, "hold instinctively as true, is a truth of nature." When God is glorified, it is the voice of nature which speaks and when God's existence is impugned, man's nature is outraged and the denial is imputed as something foreign and unnatural. The universal voice of nature can not be mistaken. The universal tongue never utters a lie. This instinctive belief grows with our development. If it fades during the storm of passion it breaks out like a blaze at the hour of death. Like a rainbow it reaches from our cradle to our grave and life would be dark without it. This is fact. Have atheists such a fact in their repertoire of sophistries? There is one process of reason which seems to be at the bottom of this universal acclamation of mankind. It must not be supposed that we admit for a moment that what is proclaimed by general consent is the outcome of a blind instinct. It is not so. Man is eminently a rational being. When all men combine in uttering one declaration, that declaration has its basis on reason.

All say that there is a God because it is impossible to explain the beings and the energies with which nature abounds, without calling into requisition a cause productive of this wonderful display of activity. That cause must be superior to everything that it brings into being and must possess all the perceptible attributes in this striking collection of acting and living things, in a higher degree than that in which they have been communicated. Effect always calls for cause and in the present instance demands a cause supreme and independent, a producer producing but unproduced, a first being, a supreme ordainer. Man viewing the marvelous panorama of existence leaps with a single and easy bound to the existence of an uncaused Artificer, to a wise Arranger, to an all-powerful Maker, in a word, to one whose nature corresponds with what is universally understood by the term God.

There are other proofs deducible from the logical working of human reason. There is conscience, which seems to attest that there is a law to which all human legislation is subject, which in its larger principles can neither be ignored nor evaded, and which supposes a Lawgiver who is His own law and has no peer and whose sanction is secure and sacred beyond the power of human language to express. No! God has not left Himself without testimony. All

the arguments may be reduced to, and in point of fact are included in, that very elementary truth that every effect implies a cause and the long chain of effects and causes eventually ends and begins with God.

In the course of a single sermon it is impossible to discuss all the proofs founded on reason alone; nay, it is hardly possible to present one single argument with anything like thoroughness.

III. But reason alone is not our only guide in this momentous question. There is the direct revelation from God, whether we take it from Holy Writ or from the mouth of the infallible Church. What has been the teaching of Scripture? Countless are the passages which illustrate this fundamental truth and illumine any sincere thinker in an honest search after the things of God. The inspired writings proclaim not only that God is, but that He is spiritual and simple, and one in His very essence. That He contains in His immensity which is the plenitude of being, which is an ocean of being, shoreless, with depth unfathomable and height unscalable and breadth immeasurable. That He is infinite and eternal, immutable and inscrutable as well as incomprehensible. That He is unalterable. That He is all perfect. That language stammers in its efforts to describe Him. He is confined by no definition. He is beyond all description. That, in a word, He is the Alpha and the Omega of everything.

Finally, Sacred Scripture pays this fine compliment to human reason, that God can be known by the things that are made. Study that classic first chapter of Paul to the Romans wherein it is affirmed that the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made; His eternal power also and divinity, so that they are inexcusable. In the face of such a proclamation what excuse can a man give for ignoring the existence of God? What an incentive is there not in it, to study the ways of Nature and through them travel and find and possess the First and only Fair! What a trumpet call it is to Science to push its investigation further and further in a spirit of reverence and worship! No doubt about the mission of Science. It is held to two obligations—conscientious accuracy and the pointing out to blinder mortals the coruscations of the infinite.

IV. The voice of the Church is only an echo of the voice of Scripture. Holding fast by the assertion of Paul she teaches that

God is easily known by the natural powers of reason. Were it a fact which was attainable with great difficulty only, St. Paul would not have branded the heathen as inexcusable. As Job (xii) tells us: "Ask the beasts and they shall teach thee, and the birds of the air and they shall tell thee. Speak to the earth and it shall answer thee and the fishes of the sea shall tell. Who is ignorant that the hand of the Lord has made all these things?"

The Popes and the Councils from the very beginning have championed this great truth. It is expressed so frequently and always supposed in every one of her dogmatic utterances. It was heralded to the whole world and to all after ages at the first ecumenical gathering, and Sunday after Sunday, yes, day after day, the people stand in close unity with the celebrant of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass to proclaim that they believe in one only God, in attesting that God is and that that God is alone and one.

V. This brings us to the second question which we have undertaken to elucidate for your instruction. Is there only one God? The answer is positive, as you were taught in your Catechism. There is only one God. This unity of the Divinity is a prerogative of the sublimity of His nature. Not only is there only one God but there can be but one God. Here again we appeal to reason. What Scripture and the Church affirm on this point our human reason, be it said in all humility and reverence, confirms. "Before me there was no God formed and after me there shall be none" (Isaias xliii). "I am the Lord and there is none else: there is no God besides me" (Isaias xlv, 5). "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. iv, 5). "One God and Father of all" (Eph. iv, 6).

Certainly these pronouncements are as unconditional as they are impressive. This has ever been the mind of the Church. What does reason testify? Can the greatest have an equal? Is there any demand for a second Deity? Reason disapproves of multiplying beings without a necessity for their existence. Reason will go so far as to call absurd the co-existence of two infinite beings. What difference would there be between them unless one had something which the other did not possess? If so, then the one lacking would be lesser than the other and if lesser not infinite, and if not infinite therefore inferior, therefore subordinate, therefore not God. Our Catechism has the true answer to the question. It says: There can be but one God because God is all-perfect and infinite and therefore can not have an equal.

This much by way of a brief answer to the double question propounded: "Is there a God and is there but one God?" There are two ways of professing our belief in the Supreme Being. We confess His existence and His unity, which here is the unity of exclusion of other gods, in obedience to our reason and in obedience to the revelation manifested through His Scripture and His Church. We can not force ourselves to believe that any man, however barbarous, has ever said to himself with a sense of that conviction which brings rest to searching minds, that there is no God. We can not but think that such a man is an outlaw from the other members of the human family of which God is the Father; that he is a traitor to his strongest instincts, a rebel against his reason. It would seem that such a man is inexcusable. Let us thank God that we know with a knowledge which can not be shaken, because it is bulwarked by faith and reason, that He is and that all He does works for the welfare of those who love Him.

V. THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

BY THE REV F. HARVEY.

"I believe in God."

SYNOPSIS.—Study of the attributes of God is the one means of gaining the knowledge of Him necessary for our spiritual life. His attributes (a) negative. i. e., denying any limitation in Him; and (b) positive: i. e., affirming certain perfections. (a) Negative: 1, God is a pure spirit; our belief in His personality in no way interferes with our conception of His spiritual nature; 2, He is immutable and eternal; satisfying the cravings of the human heart for rest amid the ceaseless changes of life; 3, God is omnipresent; a thought that if entertained constantly must make us saints. (b) Positive: 1, God is infinitely good; and His goodness is leavening the world, transforming our failures and our sins; 2, God is infinitely wise, hence we may trust Him in all things as a child may trust the love and wisdom of a parent; 3, God is infinitely just; not with the rigorous severity of human justice. His infinite knowledge makes His justice almost a synonym of mercy; 4, God is infinitely holy. It is participation in this holiness that makes us men in the supernatural order as our reason distinguishes us in the natural. The whole purpose of our moral existence is to grow in this holiness of our God, and to this end we should think often of His attributes.

Though God is our Father, He yet "dwells in light inaccessible," and no man may know Him as He is. Yet we are told that our chief business in life is to know God, to love Him, and to serve Him. Knowledge of God is the foundation on which we raise the superstructure of the spiritual life. This knowledge is absolutely essential to our spiritual well-being here, and to our eternal life hereafter; and groping as we are in the twilight of mortality, it is to be gained only by meditation on the divine attributes.

Indeed, it is by their attributes that we learn to know and to love our earthly friends. One becomes dear to us because of his kindliness, another wins our admiration by his learning, another gains our reverence for his courage and his truth; and so these qualities, these attributes, bring us into communion with that inner nature of our fellow men, who else would remain to us but strangers. So it is, too, that we come to know and to love our heavenly Father, and thus fulfill the end of our earthly being.

What we may term the fundamental attribute of the Most High is His simplicity, His entire spirituality. God is a pure spirit. His

nature admits neither higher nor lower; is entirely incommunicable. There is in Him no admixture of the material or corporeal, hence we must gain our knowledge of His nature by denying to it the essential characteristics of what we see about us. "To whom, then, have you likened God, or what image will you make for him?" says the Prophet Isaias.

In this connection we may mention a very common error entertained by many Protestants and by most rationalists about the Catholic idea of God. They say that we worship a personal God, meaning thereby, a corporeal being like ourselves, a sublimated man, as it were; and they conclude that our religion can not possibly be spiritual, since it has such a foundation. This error is due to their ignorance of the meaning attached to the word "person." By a person we mean a being who is responsible for his acts; one to whom an act may be imputed as to a responsible agent. The lower animals, for instance, are not held morally responsible for their actions, since they lack the source of responsibility—reason, and so are not spoken of as persons. Now a person, or responsible being, is not necessarily material or corporeal, and when we speak of a personal God we mean a pure spirit to whom the various acts of Deity, such as creation, redemption, and sanctification, may be imputed as to a responsible being. Our God is, indeed, a Person, but none the less is He a pure spirit, and, in the words of the apostle, "Those who adore him should adore him in spirit and in truth."

Necessarily connected with this doctrine, that God is entirely spiritual, is that of His unchangeableness. "The same yesterday, to-day and forever." All about us, and all within us, is change. The leaves fall and die, and others push forth to take their places. The days and years speed on in ceaseless alternation. Empires and nations rise and flourish, then are leveled with the dust. And our own hearts but mirror the seething change without us. Gloom follows gladness. The prizes that we strive for with all the ardor of our souls are tossed aside as apples of Sodom. Our most supreme mortal love becomes inevitably but a friendship sustained by habit, or a vague indifference; our most tragic sorrow turns to a mild wonder at our grotesque despair, and at last to utter forgetfulness. Yet with all this beating upon us of the mighty sea of change, the heart longs persistently for some assured rest; something that will anchor us to the granite of God's eternity. Our every-day speech echoes this yearning of our nature for the immutable. "Forever," is a word

constantly on our lips. Our possessions, we say, are to be ours "forever;" our vows of friendship and of love hide their frail mortality beneath such words as "eternal," "undying," "endless," and the like.

This instinctive longing for the immutable God was implanted in our hearts that we may more surely come to rest in Him. In our ceaseless turning from the changing life about and within us; in our eager search for some stable resting-place, we learn at length the consoling and sustaining strength of that attribute of our God, His changelessness. "I am who am," says the Lord. Always the same, in substance, in knowledge and in will. He can acquire no new knowledge, can formulate no new decrees, for He has known all things and has decreed that His holy will be done from all eternity. How consoling is this thought, that amid the vicissitudes and changes of our mortal life, when the hearts of friends grow cold, and our hopes have withered one by one, we may turn to the unchanging love and eternal inspiration of our Father who art in heaven.

Closely related to the immutability and the eternity of God, is His immensity, whereby He is really and truly present to all things that exist, or that possibly can exist.

This attribute of God is threefold; for not only is He everywhere by reason of His knowledge, by which He knows all things, and by reason of His power, by which He acts in all things, but also by reason of His divine nature, whereby He is in His entirety in all places. He is not present in a circumscribed manner as are things corporeal, partially in one place and partially in another, nor as are the angels, in some special place, though in their entirety in every part of that place, but He is all in all places, yet no place can be said to contain Him. This may be deduced from the fact that He is the primal cause of all things, acting upon each and every thing to bring it into existence, to preserve it, and to rule it; and since He can not act where He is not, it follows that He must be in direct communication with that upon which He is immediately acting, for there is no distinction between His power and Himself; they are one. "Whither shall I go from thy spirit, and whither shall I fly from thy face?" sings the Psalmist. "If I ascend into heaven, thou art there; if I descend into hell, thou art present. If I take my wings early in the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there also shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

Pleasing and dreadful thought! Never are we for an instant out of God's presence. He is all and entirely in the innermost depths of my heart, and is just as close to the one who is near and dear to me, yet separated from me by the boundless sea, and my whispered prayer for my friend's welfare is breathed into the heart of that God who is present to us both. The stars that write His name in letters of golden fire on heaven's firmament, are proclaiming His presence; and the dewdrop that sparkles on the leaf holds God within its trembling heart. The foul thought is born in His very presence; the wicked deed is done before His face; the ribald or blaspheming jest strikes first upon His ear. How careful we are to keep our disparaging opinion, our harsh criticism from the hearing of him against whom it is directed; but our offenses against God are committed in His presence, nay, in Himself, adding to the injury of sin the insult of a direct attack. True it is that we forget this attribute of our heavenly Father, forget that our sins are perpetrated before Him, but our forgetfulness is a poor excuse for the injury done. The forgetfulness of the train-despatcher does not restore the lives of those who have perished through his carelessness. "With desolation is the world made desolate, because there is no one who thinketh in his heart." Did we keep in mind this great truth, that God is ever with us and in us, sin would have no part in our lives, and each day would see us growing more and more into the likeness of that Divine Presence in whom we actually live and move and have our being.

Besides these negative attributes—negative because they deny any limitation in God—which help to make us understand the infinite difference between the Creator and the creature, there are positive attributes, which predicate of our heavenly Father certain perfections, such as goodness, wisdom, mercy, justice and holiness.

God's goodness, as we shall now consider it, is none other than His love for creatures. There is, of course, in Him that natural goodness which flows from the infinite perfection of His nature, and the moral goodness, which is but another term for His sanctity; but it is what the theologians call the *relative* goodness of God that has for us a peculiar strength of appeal, for that is the goodness which characterizes His relations with us. This divine goodness shows itself in many ways. It manifests itself in acts, as in the benign working of natural laws, and then we call it God's beneficence; it is but another name for grace, which is the divine goodness bestow-

ing supernatural gifts on undeserving creatures. As liberality, it dispenses its benefits without stint; clothed in the garments of patience and long-suffering it delays to punish the wicked. Under the name of mercy it succors the wretched, and as clemency remits sin and the punishment due it. God's infinite goodness and mercy wait upon our every step. He, the source of all happiness, longs to communicate His happiness to creatures, and we have but to open our hearts, remove the choking weeds of care and worldly pleasure, to realize that goodness fully. Every song bird's note that makes the air vocal with melody is not only a hymn of praise, but an evidence of God's goodness, which would awaken a pure joy in our hearts. The rain that causes the parched earth to exult for gladness, is the gift of our beneficent Father. Even the sorrow and disappointment that weigh us to the earth may be as truly a proof of God's goodness as the pain which a parent inflicts in correcting and training a child is an evidence of that parent's love. Evil is in the world, and much of it, but God's goodness is ever working in it and through it, leavening it, and slowly but surely changing it to good. "All things work together for good to those that love God," are words whose truth grows upon us with the passing years. So many of us can look back upon trials and difficulties, upon sorrows that griped the heart, and seemed to wring the very life from it, and feel that we are better men and women to-day because of our Calvary. To how many have troubles and failures and disappointments been stepping-stones to higher things; been to our spiritual eyes as the touch of the sorrowing Saviour, unsealing our sight, and making us to see the things of this life in their true proportion! When we ponder it in our hearts, and look at it in the light of our Holy Faith, we realize more and more that God's goodness is enfolding us round about, and changing sins and sufferings and temptations into life-giving grace as the air transforms noxious vapors into health-giving atmosphere. There is more of good than of ill in human nature, necessarily so, for we belong to God; we are His creation, and His goodness it is that sustains us. We might say that we are drawing that goodness of our God into us constantly with the very elements that are ever renewing our physical being. His goodness is then a part of us, a part that will gradually purge out the old leaven, and make of the sin-sodden human race a people who are true children of God, good with the goodness of their heavenly Father.

Closely related to this all-embracing goodness, is God's infinite

wisdom, "which worketh from end to end mightily and ordereth all things sweetly." This wisdom of our God supposes perfect knowledge on His part of what is best for His children, and supposes, too, His power to bring it about.

Not only do the Sacred Scriptures assure us again and again that God has done all things wisely and well, but that He is the very source of all wisdom. "All wisdom is from the Lord God, and hath been always with him, and is from all time." "If any one of you want wisdom, let him ask it of God who giveth to all men abundantly, . . . and it shall be given him."

We are apt to be very forgetful of this attribute of our Maker. Men in their folly are continually passing judgment on the wisdom of God. Their experience teaches them that they are constantly making mistakes when they attempt to judge the actions of their fellow men. They find that there are numberless things that have gone to direct a man's motives that they are ignorant of, and which when they learn, cause them to reverse their decision, but the orderly government of the Universe by Him who holds it in the hollow of His hand, is condemned offhand, if not in so many words, yet by a rebellious questioning that is little short of blasphemous. In our egoism we think that the ends we have in view are those which God should wish to have accomplished. We realize that the child is incapable of grasping the intentions of an adult, separated from it by some few years, yet, in practice at least, we think ourselves able to form an appreciation of the motives that actuate the infinite and eternal God.

The whole history of God's dealings with man shows man's inability to grasp the wisdom of God's ways, yet the knowledge of this history has not the effect on the individual heart which it should have. Again and again it has been shown that what we of this world deem folly and weakness are the very wisdom and strength of God. The weakness of Bethlehem and the folly of Calvary have renewed the face of the earth. In the strength of that weakness myriads have faced cheerfully death by torture or the more subtle martyrdom of lives of self-denial. In the wisdom of that folly God's messengers have overturned and brought to naught the most carefully planned systems of man and, through this foolishness of the Most High, have reared a structure that has won the reverent admiration of the greatest minds of every age. Such is the history of the establishment and continuance of our religion, yet this great

lesson has small effect in lessening our complaints of what we do not understand in the working out of God's promises. We still continue to murmur against the sorrows and disappointments that are adding to our spiritual stature, and making us in very deed children of God. We admit that Christ's life on earth was a demonstration of divine wisdom, but can not realize that we, His brethren, should come under the same wise law of suffering. The other attributes of God we accept unquestioningly, and, though we would shrink in horror from any expression of doubt regarding God's wisdom, yet by our unwillingness to be guided by His laws, and by our lack of submission to the divine will, we question the wisdom of our heavenly Father, and the efficiency of His government. True, it is lack of faith that underlies this mistrust. Did we have a *realizing* sense of what we profess, our hearts would be filled with that perfect peace which flows from an absolute reliance upon the wisdom of a loving Father.

We now come to the consideration of the justice of God. Justice is of two kinds, one which renders to another his due, gives something for value received, and the other, which rewards and punishes a subject according to that subject's deserts.

It is evident that justice in the first sense can not be predicated of God, since, strictly speaking, He can receive nothing from us, for all we have is already His. To Him, however, belongs retributive justice, the justice which rewards and punishes. "Thou art just, O Lord," says Tobias, "and all thy judgments are just, and all thy ways mercy and truth and judgment." And St. Paul exclaims: "There is laid up for me a crown of justice, which the Lord, the just judge, will render to me in that day." Indeed, there is a cry in the human heart that proclaims more loudly than any external testimony, the existence of a just God. The intertwining of the threads of good and evil in the warp and woof of human life, demands, we feel, the unraveling hand of a just and omnipotent Being.

Sometimes we are frightened at the thought of God's justice. It is, in truth, a dread thought, but not the terrifying thing our ignorance would make it To the general mind, justice is something hard and formal, a rigid and literal application of law to some particular case. So common is this idea of the severe and unyielding character of justice, that Shylock's claim of the pound of flesh is strenuously defended, and Portia's interference as strenuously condemned. Yet in that great poem she symbolizes true justice, which

is so closely intertwined with charity that our gross sight can scarce perceive any distinction. There is never any real conflict between God's justice and his mercy, for His all-embracing knowledge reconciles the two. Human justice condemns some unfortunate who has violated a law; divine justice, which *knows* the strength of his temptation and the frailty of his will, bids him go in peace. On the other hand, the man who legally holds vast possessions, receiving the honor and applause that wait upon success, may sue in vain for absolution at the tribunal of penance, and, accepted by men, stand rejected of God.

In how many cases have we condemned the action of our fellowman with perfect and impartial justice, as we think, and later been obliged to alter our decision because we have learned of certain extenuating circumstances. Knowledge it is that makes justice tender. There is no danger for us in God's justice if our will is upright before Him, be the world's condemnation what it may. Our frailties are covered by His justice, which knows all things, and then that justice is the synonym of mercy and of love.

God's omnipresence, His unchangeableness, His existence from all eternity, demand our reverent worship; His goodness, mercy, knowledge, and even His justice win our confidence and our love; but the contemplation of His holiness it is that sanctifies us above all things, leads us along the road of perfection until we join our voices to that heavenly choir singing, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts." Indeed, we could not bear the white light of that holiness did we not gaze at it through other attributes of our God. The most perfect human virtue, the heroic purity of the saints, the very sanctity of the immaculate Mother of God, are but reflected rays of that dazzling sun of holiness. This attribute of the Deity inspires the angelic song, is the never-ending theme of their praise. Before this holiness the very seraphim veil their faces, and those created intelligences that stand nearest to the unapproachable God tremble at its dazzling beauty. And yet we are commanded to imitate this holiness of our God. He has revealed Himself to us that we may know His holiness and desire to have a share in it. True, there is an infinite difference between the holiness of God and the holiness of man, for God is holy by His very essence, while creatures become holy by the infusion of this supernatural quality. Holiness is the conformity of the will with the supreme moral law, but God is Himself that supreme moral law, so that divine holiness may be de-

scribed as the harmony existing between the will of God and all His actions. The sanctity of God can neither increase nor diminish, while that of His creatures may grow indefinitely, and may diminish until it is utterly lost. We might say that as in the natural order man is distinguished from the brute by his reason, and losing that reason he becomes practically animal, so in the supernatural order he is man because of his share in God's holiness, forfeiting which, he sinks to the level of the devil and his host.

The entire purpose of our mortal existence is to grow into the image of this glory of our God. Our catechism tells us we were made to know, to love, and to serve God. This is but another way of saying that we were made to become holy—holy as our heavenly Father is holy. To this end Christ was born in a stable and died upon a gibbet; to this end the apostles suffered and toiled; to this end the Church has been established to wage her undying warfare with the world and the spirit of the world; to this end you and I have heard again and again that still, small voice upbraiding us for our failures and for our transgressions. We are the crown of God's creation, not because of our reason, but because we may share in the holiness of our God.

Amid the cares and worries of our daily life there may not be much time for oral prayer, or for visiting God's holy temple, but there is surely time for a thought on some attribute of our God, His goodness, His mercy, above all His constant presence with us and in us. These attributes have not been revealed to us merely for our study, for the purpose of filling our catechisms or our spiritual books, but that thoughts of them may become an integral part of our daily lives, and by increasing our knowledge and consequently our love of our Creator, make us sharers in His holiness, which is our sole passport to eternal life.

VI. THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

BY THE REV. THOMAS J. GERRARD.

"For thou lovest all things that are, and hatest none of the things which thou hast made."—Wisdom xi. 25.

SYNOPSIS.—Introduction.—Love a very real experience in men. This implies a First Cause which is perfect love. Perfect love implies universal providence. God loves and therefore cares for all reflections of Himself.

Exposition. 1. Providence is needed in all human systems: the family, the community, the state, the Church. Much more is it needed in the system of the vast and complex universe. 2. God's providence extends to particulars. All things for man, but man for God. God cares for the body, but as instrumental to the soul. 3. God is unchangeable in His providence. Moves all things sweetly, i. e., according to their natures. Miracles are not an interference with but a fulfilment of divine Providence. No such thing as chance. Providence reaches even to man's free will. 4. Providence assigns to all things both a particular and a universal end. The particular end may fail, but not the final one.

Difficulties answered. 1. There are seeming failures and cruelties in nature. Our view of nature is infinitesimally small. We can see the reason of many things. But eventually we have to make a meritorious act of faith and trust to the loving providence of God. 2. Human suffering. The result of sin somewhere. Suffering educative. Eventually, however, we must fall back on God's goodness. 3. The permission of sin the most staggering of all difficulties. The difficulty a part of God's providence designed to beget and foster faith. Manifests the grace of forgiveness and the attribute of justice. But again the ultimate answer is found in God's love.

Conclusion.—Trust in God in spite of all difficulties. Pray in spite of all dejections. Providence demands and does not dispense with prayer. Our sentiments of kindness realized in God in an infinite degree. Whatever God does is right.

The most real and most keen of all human experiences is that of love. It is the double thirst which every one has felt, but which no one on this side of the grave has fully quenched. Whence comes this insatiable longing? It must be traced to its source in everlasting uncreated love. We are accustomed to look at the material world and argue from it to a first cause. But the material world is scarcely dream-stuff compared with the reality of will-power and love. Much more then must the beginning of love be sought in the ultimate Being who Himself is love. And having arrived at absolute love, we can easily see that it must hold all things within its spell. Were it to miss even the poorest of created things it would not be absolute and

perfect. It must from its very nature magnetize everything. Experience and reflection both go to assure us what God has revealed through His spirit: "Thou lovest all things that are, and hatest none of the things which Thou hast made."

Knowledge of this wide-reaching, all-embracing love is the bedrock of our trust in God's providence. We may wonder at first why God should exercise His love toward all things. The reason is that all things in some way reflect the beauty of God. God looking upon the vast treasures of His own mind must love Himself. So also in looking upon the images of those treasures He must love them. And loving them He must use His vast wisdom and power to take care of them and arrange and direct them to His own great glory.

When we look at our own little systems we see that providence is needed in order that they may be carried on. In the family the father must go out to work in order to provide food and clothing and shelter for himself, his wife and children. In the community there must be a mayor and council to take care of the affairs of the community: to provide for the poor and to attend to the common needs. In the nation there must be a government to rule the communities of which it is composed, and to watch and protect its interests as against other nations. Likewise in the Church there must be the priest to take care of the parish, the bishop to rule the diocese, and the supreme Pastor for the whole Church. "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep," said Our Lord to Peter. If therefore in these organizations a certain amount of providence is needful for their well-being, what shall we say of the vast mechanism of the universe? What keeps the planets in their courses? What regulates the seasons? Whence comes about that unspeakable arrangement of law and order, which, with each and every new discovery of science, is known to be more vast and more complex? The verdict of science has been voiced by the prince of scientists. Lord Kelvin, speaking as president of the British Association in 1882, said: "Overpowering proofs of intelligence and benevolent design lie around us, showing to us, through Nature, the influence of a free will; and teaching us that all living beings depend upon one ever-acting Creator and Ruler." Thus again do reason and experience carry us back to what we knew from the revelation of holy wisdom: "But thou, O Father, dost govern all things by thy providence."

There have been many speculations as to how God exercises His

providence; whether, for instance, it is by His direct active operation or by reason of an impulse and arrangement given to the universe in the beginning; whether He acts by His own personal power and intelligence or by the aid of angelic power and intelligence. We need not stay to consider these. There is, however, a practical question which concerns our personal attitude towards God. Has God a particular care for each one of us? God is personally and actively present everywhere. He has sent His Holy Spirit to make His abode with us. He must, therefore, regard all things in particular.

First we see how He arranges all things around us for our service. In the beginning, when the world was without form and void, the spirit of God brooded over the face of the deep and prepared a place for man to live in. He separated the water from the land and the darkness from the light. He made the green things grow and the creeping things live. He planted paradise for man to dwell in. And ever since then He has gone on brooding over the primary stuff of which all things are made. The providence of God is behind everything: the blades of grass, the leaves, the trees, the wind, the rain, the sunshine: everything that is for man's service. Two sparrows are sold for a farthing, and yet not one of them falls to the ground without our heavenly Father's care.

We, however, are better than the sparrows. It is by God's provision of food that we are able to sustain our bodies. It is by His law that the blood courses through our veins. It is by the breath of His life that we are able to breathe and replenish our heart's blood. "He covereth the heaven with clouds, and prepareth rain for the earth. He maketh grass to grow upon the mountains, and herbs for the service of men." "The eyes of all hope in thee, O Lord, and thou givest them meat in due season."

Yet even this minute care of our bodies is directed toward another end. Our soul is our real self. That is God's special treasure. There His providence keeps constant watch that we may be drawn ever nearer and nearer to Him. He gives light to the will to enable it to act. He gives fire to the heart to inflame the whole soul and bring it entirely into His service. "It is God who worketh in you both to will and to accomplish according to His good will."

In all this wonderful providence God preserves His unchangeableness. He does not have to keep stepping in to put things right. If a stone rolls down the mountain side it fulfils eternal laws. If the lion goes abroad to seek its prey, it is because of the unchanging

law of brute instinct. If man is allowed freedom in his actions, it is only because God wills those actions to be the result of man's freedom. And if at any time something seems to happen contrary to the laws of nature, a miracle, it is not that the laws have been suspended, but that for some divine purpose, these events have been foreseen and arranged, and so are the fulfilment rather than the alteration of the divine will. God reaches "from end to end mightily and ordereth all things sweetly." Thus all things that happen, if they be not influenced by the free will of man, happen of necessity. Many things seem to happen by chance. The lightning strikes an oak-tree and misses the man standing by. He thinks he is very lucky. But in reality there is no chance whatever in the incident. It is all due to the working out of fixed laws. Things seem to happen by chance simply because we can not see all the circumstances. Huxley spoke a great truth when he said that chance was but an alias for ignorance. Whatever happens therefore uncaused by the free-will of man, is the direct result of God's providence. Nor does the free-will of man escape God's providence. Indeed, this is the favorite object of divine care and attention. Of man it is said: "Thou hast subjected all things under his feet, sheep and all oxen and the beasts of the field." All the rest of creation is for man, to be directed by man's spiritualized free-will to the service of God. Whether, therefore, man is influenced by the world around him or by grace within him, it is all the result of God's providence taking care of him. "There is no power but from God: and those that are, are ordained of God."

This arrangement of God, however, must always be considered in the light of God's final aim. He gives to each of His creatures a certain value for their own sakes; but a much greater value for the sake of all creation. An artist will value the chemist's discovery of a new color, first for the sake of the hue itself, but more especially for the place it will occupy in the composition of some beautiful picture. Thus in God's creation all things have both a particular and a universal end. It is the particular end of trees to bear fruit. It is the particular end of bees to make honey. It is the universal end of all things to glorify God. Thus it may happen that many things fail in their particular aim; but never in their final aim. A gardener cuts off vine-bearing branches in order that those that remain may produce better grapes. Whenever then there seems to be failure in

nature, we must conclude that it is only a failure of the particular end and not of the final one.

This distinction between the particular and final end of things is a very important one. Its neglect is the cause of nearly all the confusion which exists in people's minds concerning Divine Providence. God's creation scheme is so vast and so complex. It reaches right back through all the ages of history, through the life of pre-historic man, through the long centuries and aeons of geological time. It stretches forward through all future ages and on past the end of time into eternity. It comprises all our earth, all our solar system, all other stellar systems of which ours is but a unit. And if the telescope shows us length and breadth in indefinite dimensions, the microscope and chemical experiment show us infinitesimal worlds in smallness. It has been computed that in a thimbleful of hydrogen there are 1,200 millions of millions of millions of atoms, while each atom is made up of electrons, each one of which when compared with its atom is as a crumb to a cathedral. How very small then must be our partial insight into God's plans! A fly lights upon a great picture, say the Sistine Madonna of Raphael. It sees only a little black patch on the hem of Our Lady's robe. It recognizes nothing of the superb composition of form and color of which the black patch is a portion. Yet the fly's apprehension of the picture is far more extensive than our apprehensions of God's picture. So it comes about that if we look only to the particular end of things and neglect their final end, we get a distorted view of God's providence. Relying merely on our own infinitesimal outlook we are bound to experience the difficulty of God's seeming improvidence, seeming forgetfulness, seeming weakness, seeming unkindness.

The failures in nature are a constant source of trouble. Take, for instance, the mayflies. Their larvae form most elaborate little houses for themselves in the beds of streams. They live under water until ready to emerge from the chrysalis state. Then after all this preparation they rise to live their little sunshine life. Yet out of a thousand probably only a dozen escape the trout and the swallows. Wherefore all this waste?

The other day the children of one of our convent schools were playing in the garden, when some of them came running in great distress to the nun in charge. Little Agnes had caught a bird and had it shut up in a tiny box. "Let it go at once," said the sister, "it will die." "Poor little birdie," said the child, "but it would go

straight to heaven then." So the sister had to explain that the bird could not go to heaven as it had no soul baptized in the Blood of Jesus; that animals could not sin because they had no will; that the cat could not help being cruel to the birds, nor yet the birds to the flies, for God made them so. And just then they were able to see a fly-catcher darting from its place on a tree catching flies every moment. "But why did God make them so cruel?" asked the child. "It is nearly time to go in. Run and fetch me the bell." This was the answer she got from the provident sister. We are all children in the presence of God's creation. We can see the reasons of many things. But we need not carry our reasoning very far before we come to the end of it. Our only answer is that God is good. The particular end may fail hundreds of times, but the final one never. He loves all things that are and hates none of the things which He has made.

The difficulty is felt more keenly when we come to human suffering. The reason is because then it touches the whole man; not merely his intelligence, but, as in the case of holy Job, his flesh and his bone. "Though He should kill me, yet will I hope in him." That was Job's attitude of mind. We can look on the history of the man of patience and see how all turned out well in the end. We can see that much of the suffering which exists is the direct result of sin. We can believe that all suffering is the result of sin somewhere, if not of the sufferer, at least of some one else. We can know the oneness of our race and the need of bearing each other's burdens. But when we are face to face with suffering in reality, then it is that we need our faith in God's providence. Aware of our own sinfulness we might bravely bear our own sufferings. But the difficulty presses heavily upon us when we see those suffer whom we love and know to be innocent.

The newspapers told us of a sad case recently. A young couple, father and mother, were putting their children to bed, their only two. The mother was bathing the baby while the father played with the elder boy. The boy, in his delight, jumped from his father's arms, fell downstairs and was killed. The mother rushed downstairs to her son, and, in her distress, forgot the child upstairs. Then when she did return it was only to find her baby drowned. What shall we say in the presence of such a calamity? What could the mother say? What could the father say? We can not *see* the good of such effects of God's providence. But by a strong act of faith we can *believe*

that God is good, that He loves all things that are, and hates none of the things that He has made. We may try to fathom the mystery, but our safer plan will be to bow down and adore.

In seeking the source of suffering in sin the difficulty is lessened for many people. But for many others it is only postponed. Can the providence of God be justified in the presence of so much sin? Especially in the presence of everlasting sin? We may get glimpses here and there of God's providence in the permission of sin. We may look at the lives of St. Paul and St. Augustine and St. Mary Magdalen and St. Mary of Egypt and see in their sins the occasions of the wonderful grace of sorrow and repentance. Or we may see in the punishment of sin the manifestation of God's justice. "What is there that I ought to do more to my vineyard, that I have not done to it? Was it that I looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes? And now I will show you what I will do to my vineyard. I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be wasted: and I will break down the wall thereof and it shall be trodden down. And I will make it desolate." Finally, however, we must have recourse to the one great truth of God's love and the deduction from that truth, that God's love is at the root of His providence. We can not *see* but we can *believe* that God's love is eternal.

Here then is the practical lesson to be learnt from the truth of God's providence. God must be trusted under all circumstances. No matter how contrary to our ideas of justice and right and mercy He seems to act, we must believe that He has done right after all. Those very sentiments which cause us distress come from Him and must be found in Him in an eminent way and infinite degree. He who made the eye, shall He not see? He who made the ear, shall He not hear? And He who gave us our pity, shall He not prove merciful and gentle past all imagining? His care for us is so minute that the very hairs of our head are all numbered. He knows all that is needful for us before we ask Him. Yet we must pray: "Our Father . . . give us this day our daily bread." Our prayer is not a petition to God to change His mind, but it is a condition which God has attached to His gifts. When then we pray for one thing and get something else which we do not want, we must believe and trust that it is the result of God's loving providence. We must see God in the ordinary ways of nature just as well as in the miraculous. And if at times those ways jar on our sense of what is kind and good we

must remember that God's ways are not our ways, and that all things, even the most appalling events in life, work together for the good of those who love God. The dark night comes to every soul sooner or later and causes it to lament as Sion lamented of old: "The Lord hath forsaken me, the Lord hath forgotten me." But God replies as He did to Sion: "Can a woman forget her infant, so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? And if she should forget, yet will I not forget thee."

VII. THE HOLY TRINITY.

BY RIGHT REV. MGR. CANON JOHN S. VAUGHAN.

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."—Matt. xxviii. 19.

SYNOPSIS.—Reason, Scripture, Church proclaim the existence of God. Christ lifted the veil and showed us something of the inner nature of God, viz., the Trinity. Trinity necessary for the infinite happiness and infinite love of God. Meaning and explanation of this mystery. Relation of the Three Persons to each other; to the Incarnate Word; to Christ in the Eucharist. Vestiges of the Trinity in creation. 1. Beings.—Material, spiritual, partly material and partly spiritual. 2. Matter.—Solid, liquid, gas. 3. Dimensions in nature.—Length, breadth, thickness. 4. Form.—Lines, surfaces, solids. 5. Life.—Vegetative, sensitive, rational. 6. Souls.—Natural life, supernatural life, glorious life.

Conclusion.—Adoration and thanksgiving to the Trinity.

There is no truth so clearly written upon the face of nature, as the existence of God. No one whose mind is not hopelessly blinded by pride or prejudice, can fail to detect the most startling indications of His goodness, His power, and His wisdom in the immense universe, that upon every side stretches around him to untold distances. Hence the Seraphim, in the vision accorded to Isaias, cried out, one to another, "Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord God of Hosts, *all the earth is full of thy glory*" (Is. vi. 3), while the Psalmist, in similar words, reminds us that "the heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of his hands" (Ps. xviii). Well then may St. Paul assure the Romans that they who refuse to acknowledge this fundamental truth, are without excuse. "The visible things of God, from the creation of the world are *clearly* seen, being understood by the things that are made, His eternal power and divinity, so that they (who believe not) are inexcusable" (Rom. i. 19). In a similar manner the wise man, under inspiration of the Holy Ghost writes:—"By the greatness of the beauty and of the creature, the Creator of them may be seen, so as to be known thereby" (Wisdom xiii). Indeed any doubt upon this point that might otherwise have lingered in our minds, has been swept away by a solemn decree of the General Council of the Vatican, which declares that even apart

from any supernatural revelation, man may arrive at the knowledge of the existence of a Supreme Being, by a proper exercise of his reason, and may even obtain some knowledge of many of His attributes, more especially of His goodness, wisdom and power, which are everywhere apparent.

There are, however, in God depths that no human plummet can ever sound, and riches that no human intelligence can ever measure. Of these one of the greatest and most incomprehensible is the adorable mystery of the ever Blessed Trinity.

This is a mystery that we could never have discovered for ourselves. It is no doubt true, that certain faint traces of it exist in the visible creation, but these traces do not stand out boldly and conspicuously so as to be readily seized. Hence, it became necessary that this sublime doctrine should be more explicitly revealed to us by Jesus Christ, under the new dispensation.

In His infinite goodness He deigned to lift up a corner of the veil that hides the mysteries of His eternal essence for us, and communicate to us one of the profoundest secrets of His divine nature; a secret by which we are enabled to realize more perfectly the infinite richness and felicity of His life.

The utter solitude and isolation that *seemed* to characterize the eternal existence of God, and which was so difficult for man to reconcile with his ideal of perfect happiness, at once disappears before the appearance of this newly revealed doctrine. We now learn that God is not, and never really was, alone. During the untold and unthinkable duration before angels or men were made, God was not without society, He was not without companionship. On the contrary, He enjoyed the most perfect intercourse, wholly independently of all creatures; an intercourse, in fact, so supreme and adequate, that the creation of angels and men could add little or nothing to it. Indeed, the intercourse between God and creatures could never have satisfied the infinite capacity of the Supreme Being. Between Him and the very highest of His creatures, there stretches out an infinite distance. It is impossible that God should ever be able to make Himself adequately known to the finite being; or that any finite being should be able to communicate with God, as with an equal; as well hope to pour the entire ocean into the hollow of one's hand. Only an infinite Person can really stand on a level with the infinite. Only an infinite Person can be the recipient of an infinite thought, or of any infinite communication. Only an

infinite Person can know and be known, can love and be loved, in an infinite measure.

God may be loved by creatures, but not adequately; not as He deserves; not as His nature demands. A love, full enough, broad enough, and deep enough, to fill and flood His own Being, must come from an infinite Person: from one just as truly God as Himself.

Something distantly analogous to this may be learned from our own experience. A bride may be, *in a certain sense,* loved by her pet dogs and birds. She may pass happy moments in their company. But will such mean things satisfy her? No! Her heart needs something more than the affection of an irrational animal, a creature so far below her. She craves for the love of a man; i. e., for one of *a like nature* with herself. She hungers for the love of a *human* being; of one who can understand her, and sympathize with her, and share her feelings, and who, like *herself,* possesses intelligence and reason and free will, and who in every sense is her equal.

So in like manner, God could never possess complete and infinite happiness, if loved only by mere creatures, by beings, that is to say, infinitely below Him. Being Himself infinite He required the society, the companionship and the love of an infinite person; without which infinite happiness would be but a word, and not a divine attribute at all. How is such companionship possible? No one could have guessed or imagined were the solution not borne in upon us by the revelation of the mystery of the adorable Trinity. It announces and asserts the plurality, while, at the same time, it declares an absolute and essential unity. This at once shows the difficulty. Although the doctrine is above reason, it is not opposed to reason. It involves no contradiction. For observe: The Church does not declare that which is one to be at the same time three: nor does she teach that which is three to be also only one. No. She proclaims and enforces the doctrine of strict unity in the Supreme Being, only she goes on to explain that this unity, which is ever absolute and unbroken, attaches to the *nature* of God and to the nature only. At the same time she proclaims a plurality, but the plurality attaches to the *Persons* and to the Persons only. Hence no violence is done to reason.

To say that three Persons are but one Person, or to say that one God is in reality three Gods, would be a contradiction and an impossibility. But then the Church does not say anything of the kind. All she does declare is that one *God* is three *Persons;* and that three *Per-*

sons are but one *God;* which may indeed be incomprehensible, but which in no way involves a contradiction. From the foregoing considerations it is clear that the divine and infinite Persons constitute a true society, unique in its kind; a society whose members are in the most perfect manner, equal, related, and worthy of each other, and which therefore is the infinite, unattainable, eternal and essential ideal of all other societies.

Let us now express the doctrine a little more explicitly. The Church teaches that there exists only one God; infinite in all perfections; and that in this one God there are three perfect and distinct Persons. They are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. The Father is not the Son; the Son is not the Holy Ghost; and the Holy Ghost is neither the Father nor the Son. The Father is truly God; the Son is truly God; the Holy Ghost is truly God. Yet there are not three Gods. There is but one only God. How can that be? We know not. How can we explain it? We are unable to explain it. This is where the mystery comes in.

There is further a certain relationship between the Persons. Thus the Son is begotten of the Father: He is related to Him by a process of divine generation. Does this make the Father more ancient than the Son? No. Does it imply that the Father must have existed before He begot the Son? No. For neither the Father nor the Son had any beginning whatsoever. They together with the Holy Ghost, always were, are, and ever will be; all equal; none superior, none inferior, and without any "before" or "after." The Father is eternal; the Son is eternal; the Holy Ghost is eternal. Yet, there are not three eternals, but only one eternal.

Similarly, the Holy Ghost proceeds from both Father and Son, yet He is the same Lord and God as they are. Though He proceeds from them, He is in no sense inferior; they are in no way anterior or superior. The Father is omnipotent, and omniscient, and eternal and infinite. The Son is omnipotent, and omniscient, and eternal and infinite. The Holy Ghost is omnipotent, omniscient, eternal and infinite. Yet there are not three omnipotents, nor three omniscients, nor three eternals, nor three infinites; but one only God, who is at once omnipotent, omniscient, eternal and infinite.

The divine Persons are indivisible, inseparable, and so united in one nature, that where one is the rest must be. Though indivisible, they are distinct, because the Persons are different, though the nature is the same. That is to say: No divine Person can separate

His personality from His nature. Hence, where one Person is, there also must be the divine nature. But the one nature is, and must ever be, common to the three Persons; consequently the other two Persons must be equi-present there likewise.

The whole question hinges upon the unity of essence and the plurality of Persons as may best be realized by a concrete example.

Carefully consider then the following doctrine: Jesus Christ is truly man; but He is also truly God. Then, are God the Father and God the Holy Ghost also man? No. By no means. But why not? For the simple reason that it was not the *nature* of God that became man, that nature which is common to all three; but it was the *Person* of God the Son, that Person who is not common to the three, but is distinct and undivided.

Now let us turn to our second illustration; viz., the Holy Eucharist. As every well instructed Catholic knows by virtue of the words of the consecration, the bread and wine are changed into the sacred Body and Blood of Christ. Now comes the question: Is the human soul of Jesus Christ also present? Certainly it is, but not in virtue of the consecrating words, which do not even refer to it; but because since the resurrection, body and soul are inseparable. In short, where the Sacred Body is, the Soul of Jesus Christ must also be. This is what theologians express by the word "concomitance." And what shall we say about the divinity of Christ? That is also present, and for the same reason; viz., because where the Body, and, in fact, the entire humanity of Jesus Christ is present there also must be present the divinity. No power can separate them. Then are the Eternal Father, and the Holy Ghost also truly present in the Blessed Sacrament? Dear brethren, consider for a moment for yourselves, in the light of the principles already laid down, and you will at once see that the answer must be in the affirmative.

Observe: There are not three Divine Essences, but only one. Hence it must follow, that wherever that one divine essence is, there must be all three Persons. The nature of God can not be parcelled out among three. No such division is so much as possible. But since there is only one nature or essence, wherever that nature is, there also must be equally present each of the Divine Persons. But, in the Blessed Sacrament there is most certainly the divine substance of nature, then there must also be, not in virtue of the words of consecration, but by concomitance, not only God the Son, but also God the Father and the Holy Ghost.

If we speak always of the presence of Jesus Christ, and of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, and but seldom mention, in this connection, the other members of the Trinity, it is only because the Sacred Body and Blood of Jesus Christ alone are present *by virtue of the words of institution,* and the sacred Body and the sacred Blood were assumed by the Sacred Person alone, and not by the Holy Ghost.

Theologians teach that all acts of God upon the creation, i. e. all acts *ad extra,* must be attributed equally to the three divine Persons. Hence the visible and the invisible universes are the work of the triune God. As a consequence, it is not to be wondered at that everything, from the highest to the lowest, both in the spiritual and the natural orders, should bear some faint reflection at least of Him who fashioned them. Spiritual creatures, such as the angels and such as the souls of men, will naturally bear a more perfect image of the Trinity than material objects, since a spiritual and immaterial substance is better adapted to reflect it than any other. This is undeniable. Yet there are some traces of the mystery of the Adorable Trinity to be detected even in the visible creation around us, as may easily be demonstrated.

That the image and likeness of God is to be found in our immortal soul, is a fact too well known to you all, to need any development here. So, passing that by, let us approach a truth not so generally recognized by the majority of Christians. I mean the remarkable fact that even inanimate nature and material things likewise, disclose some traces of the infinite Creator who called them into being.

Whether we look out over the vast universe, in the midst of which we live; or whether we confine our study to the little orb in which the force of gravity holds us prisoners all our lives, we shall be obliged to conclude that all is ruled by a certain trinity in unity. That is to say, all nature, and every object in nature breaks up into a threefold division, while at the same time these three divisions are bound together in a true unity. But before descending to details, let us throw a glance at Creation, as a whole. By "creation" we, of course, understand all that God's hands have made; in short, all that exists outside God Himself; all that is not God. All these objects fall under one common denominator. They form one single thing, i. e., *the creation.* Nevertheless, from this one designation, common to all, as from a single stem, they branch farther into three,

and only three necessary divisions. For, however numerous and varied and unlike creatures may be, every single creature necessarily ranges itself under one of three heads. Every creature is either (1) wholly spiritual, as are the angels and archangels; or else (2) wholly material, as the metals, the rocks, the seas and the mountains, or else (3) partly spiritual and partly material, as man, who unites the two in a single personality, his soul being spiritual, and his body material.

Selecting the lowest of these divisions, we will now briefly consider how the Trinity is reflected in simple matter. I soon discover that matter exists in three, but only in three different states. Though always matter, yet it assumes three, and only three, possible forms. Here is a rock. It is hard, tough and stubborn. That is matter under one of its forms. Beyond the rocks lie the waters of the great ocean. These waters are soft, yielding, and of a totally different character. Water is as truly matter as is the rock; but it is matter in another of its forms. Then above the water and the rocks is the air. Here we have matter, as truly as before, but it is in another, a third condition. It is more rarefied and subtle and lighter, and more obedient to every external impulse than even the water. From this it is clear that matter exists, but not always in the same state. It may exist in the *solid* state, or in the *liquid* state, or in the state of gas or *vapor*. How many states are there? Three. Yet these three include all. A fourth state can not be so much as imagined.

Here is a piece of ice. It is solid. Expose it to the influence of the sun; it passes into the liquid state; apply a still fiercer heat and it disappears in the form of vapor. Instead of a piece of ice, drop a lump of gold or silver or lead or of any other metal whatsoever into the melting pot; and it may be made to pass through the same three stages as the ice. The only difference is that a considerably intenser heat is required, first to melt, and then to vaporize metals. There is no doubt but that, given heat sufficient, *the entire earth* and all it contains, and every material substance, may be resolved not only into liquid, but also into vapor. Indeed scientists assure us that it was as vapor, or, as some express it, "as a gas cloud" that the earth first began its independent existence; yet, in all these different states it ever remains the same substance. There is consequently a *unity* of substance and a *trinity* of condition—one in essence; three in state. Thus a trinity and unity embraces all material things.

Now take any substance you please, say a rock or a mountain, and you will observe how this triune law is manifested in yet another way. Every material substance possesses three and only three dimensions. In the pebble I pick up off the road, as well as in the colossal sun shining in the heavens, there is, and must be, length, breadth and thickness. In fact all visible things, of whatever character and variety, are contained by these dimensions; and it is just as impossible to increase as to reduce the number. Except as contained by these three, no material substance can exist. One can not even imagine such substances with four or with two, or with any number but just three. A piece of gold may be beaten extremely thin; but, in addition to its length and its superficial breadth, it *must* possess some thickness; since length and breadth without thickness, is nothing but a figment of the mind.

Let us pass to consider how material substances are composed, so far as their external form and shape are concerned. The answer is, of (1) lines, of (2) surfaces and of (3) solids. These are the three ideas that we derive from the most cursory glance at the visible universe around us. If, further, we examine these three in detail we shall find that each in its turn discloses in itself a unity and trinity. A single straight line, for instance, is a single whole, but it contains three and only three essential parts. For what is a straight line but two distinct points, and the space between them? Every conceivable line *must* have (1) a beginning, or a point at which it starts; (2) an end, or the point at which it terminates, and (3) the distance between. Try and imagine any single straight line that is not made up of these three parts. Impossible! You can not.

A trinity and unity forms also the essence of every surface. If we wish to enclose a space by straight lines, what is the very least number of such lines that we need employ? Three. No space can be enclosed, and no surface formed, with less than three lines. That is the minimum. And if we examine the matter more closely, we shall find that every surface, enclosed by straight lines, is in reality, either a single triangle, or else two or more triangles placed side by side. Take, for instance, the very page which you are reading. What is it but two right-angled triangles, united at either base? Draw an imaginary line right across the page from one corner to the opposite, and the two triangles are at once recognizable. A pentagon is a combination of three triangles; a hexagon a combination of four; in fine, *every* rectilinear figure, when analyzed,

may be resolved into a collection of triangles. Thus a trinity controls all surfaces, as well as all lines. And we have already shown it also enters into the composition of all solids, which necessarily possess (1) length, (2) breadth and (3) thickness.

These few examples might be enormously multiplied,* but time will not permit us to enlarge further upon this fascinating theme. Let me, however, before concluding, beg you to bear in mind that the threefold divisions, of which I have spoken, are not arbitrary divisions of one's own inventing. They are ingrained in the very nature of things; and exist independently of us and will continue to in spite of us. They are just as deeply seated as any other essential characteristic and the more closely we examine them the more clearly we perceive the impossibility of evading this ubiquitous shadow of the trinity in unity, and the unity in trinity, which falls upon everything which God has made.

We will conclude with two singularly interesting illustrations. The one has to do with organic life in general; and the other, with the special life of each individual human soul. Taking organic life first, we see at a glance, that it is a single stem with three totally distinct branches. There is (1) *vegetable* life, enjoyed by all kinds of trees, shrubs and plants; then (2) there is *sensitive* or purely animal life, possessed by all kinds of birds, beasts, fish, reptiles, etc., and (3) lastly, there is *rational* life, special prerogative for men of all races and languages and colors. This is no fanciful division. The one idea "life" is present in all; yet it exhibits itself in three several ways. No one can discover a fourth kind of organic life. There are just three: no more and no less.

Now let us consider an individual human soul, over whose destinies this same mysterious trinity holds sway. The soul enters the earth possessing only its *natural* life: then the waters of Holy Baptism flow over it, and, at once, it is lifted up above nature and begins to live the life of *supernatural grace;* which is totally different to the life of mere nature. If it perseveres it dies at last to the world, but only to enter upon a new and still sublimer life, viz., the life of *eternal glory* in heaven. Now observe. It is one and the same soul; yet it lives in succession three distinct lives. The same individual soul is at one period leading the life of nature, then the life of grace, and finally the life of eternal glory. The lives are three. The

*For many other instances, see chapter VI. in my book: "Thoughts for All Times."

soul is one. There is unity, since the individual remains identical; there is trinity because the states are distinctly three.

At present we can see the image of the Blessed Trinity in creation but obscurely, since the eyes of our soul are bandaged; yet even now, we see enough to fill us with a holy wonder and admiration, and to excite within us a longing for the future, when the veil will be drawn aside, and when the light of glory will fill and flood our soul with a fuller and deeper knowledge of the untold splendors of God's uncreated and unparalleled magnificence. Let us close our discourse with the celestial song of the Seraphim, as heard by Isaias, and adore the thrice holy Trinity, as we repeat—if not with our lips—at least with our hearts and minds: "Holy! Holy! Holy! Lord God of Hosts, all the earth is full of thy glory."

VIII. OBSCURITY OF RELIGIOUS MYSTERIES.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JAMES BELLORD, D.D.

"If any man love me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and will make our abode with him."—John xvi, 23.

SYNOPSIS.—The world looks askance at faith because (1) *of its mysteries and* (2) *of the obscurity of these mysteries.*

Reason teaches that religion must contain mysteries. This is proven from (1) *the nature of religion,* (2) *the nature of the human faculties,* (3) *the nature of faith, i. e., supernatural gift. Love a great help to those who seek the truths of faith. Sin a great obstacle to faith. Our Lord made no allowance for want of faith. Reward of faith.*

I. The Blessed Trinity is the great mystery of Christianity. It is absolutely incomprehensible; it is not capable of being discovered, or of being proved true, or of being explained and made clear by unaided reason, as some other truths may be; but we are left entirely dependent on revelation. This is an idea against which very many have revolted. It is humbling to pride of intellect that an important matter demanding our assent should not be submitted for our examination and approval. Faith is belief without seeing. There are many who insist that seeing is believing, and in consequence they will not endure the yoke of religion. If religion were simply a human institution, it would be very well for men to insist on understanding thoroughly before accepting it. They would not be justified in enslaving their intellect by promising unconditional obedience to a mere man and binding themselves to the unknown. This is what the Church condemns in secret societies. But God has the right, and He alone, to demand such a sacrifice. The highest homage that creatures can render God is the oblation of their noblest faculty, and the submission of the intellect to the obedience of faith, by giving the firmest assent to truths propounded by God and not understood by us. This service is actually demanded by God, and it is necessarily demanded in supernatural religion. If God has revealed to us any truths of a superior order, there must be obscurities and mysteries. The acceptance of these is a necessary part of our duty if we are to "honor God with our substance" (Prov. iii, 9), i. e. to serve Him with each one of our faculties. There can be no true religion with-

out this demand and this service. But this is just what a certain part of the world will not tolerate. It does not want the supernatural in any form, and it will maintain its intellectual independence even in the face of God. It has said plainly: "I will not serve" (Jerem. ii, 20).

The enemies of religion are forever denouncing it as unreasonable for the very qualities which reason requires that it should have, viz., for its mysteries and their obscurity. The mystery of the Holy Trinity, has been a favorite object of attack; but every other mystery has been assailed in turn—the fall of Adam, the Incarnation, Redemption by Jesus Christ, His miracles, the Immaculate Conception and the divine maternity, the prerogative of the Church, her holiness in spite of scandals within her boundaries, the resurrection of the body, future punishment. Some profess to find these inconsistent with known facts, opposed to the evidence of human reason, and they reject them in common with the whole system. On the other hand there have been some who have accepted all Christian doctrines reverently, but have tried to minimize their obscurity; they have endeavored to explain all that is mysterious, and to show that the hidden things of God are well within the grasp of human understanding. This is a faulty excess. Theological reasoning can do much in proving that God has revealed such and such mysteries, it can show that they are not opposed to right reason, and it can make comparisons and bring illustrations, but it never professes to make men fully comprehend these truths. Let us now consider the obscurity of religious mysteries. We shall see that it is most reasonable that religion should be beyond reason, and that this fact affords no ground for refusing belief.

II. There must of necessity be obscurity and mystery in religion, whether we consider its nature, or the nature of human faculties.

1. Different kinds of truths are susceptible of different kinds of proof; they are not all made evident to us in the same way. Some truths we grasp at once by intuition as soon as they are presented to us, such as that twice two are four, that the whole of a thing is greater than its part. Other things we know by our senses, such as the brightness of the sun, the harmony of certain musical chords. Other things we know by reasoning or deduction, and others by authority, i. e., being told of them. These last are things which are past or far off, and which do not fall under our observation. In this case we examine the credibility of the person who in-

forms us, his sources of knowledge and his truthfulness. The truths of religion are of this class. They belong to a higher sphere than nature; we can not discover them, we accept them on the word of another; and when that other is God our belief is divine faith. We can find proof that God has revealed them, and that they come to us through His accredited messengers, but they can not be demonstrated to us by our own intuition, by our senses, or by deduction. This of course must be the case. God is infinite in His being and in perfections; man is limited, and infinitely small before God. The lesser can not contain the greater. Man can not hold the ocean in the hollow of his hand, and still less can his mind comprehend the immensity of God's perfection. That which is beyond the grasp of the finite is mystery. A religion which contained nothing superior to reason would not include God; it would be emptiness, folly, and falsehood. A religion without mystery is no religion.

How can any one expect that man should be able to grasp all religious truth? Human faculty can not grasp the whole of anything, even of those things which lie within its own range. No man, though he had the most receptive mind, though he were to live ten thousand years, would be able to take in even the products of other men's minds. He could not even skim the great mass of books in the world, the productions of imagination and reflection and experience, the compilations, the speculations, the observations of innumerable kinds. The sharpest senses fail within a short distance. No one claims to distinguish an object ten miles off as clearly as one that is before the eyes; yet some expect that they should be able to master the remotest secrets of the Divinity, as they would a piece of present mechanism. Nature and human life are full of inexplicable mysteries, men must accept and acknowledge them without understanding. What folly it is and what presumption for any to think that he could comprehend all the mysteries of the infinite and incomprehensible! The faculty of reason, which he sets up in opposition to mystery, is sufficient to show him that the existence of mystery is most reasonable.

The obscurity of divine truths is not an imperfection in them, as it would be in some article of human teaching; but it is a consequence of their perfection and of their lofty origin. If we could sound their depths that very fact would prove that they could not claim our assent as being supernatural. Moreover, the fact that we have not been able to exhaust them in this life assures us that

there is occupation and enjoyment for our noblest faculties in the next world. We may know that there is still an infinity of knowledge beyond what we can acquire here, that our real life—the life of action—is not ended here, but that a fuller life with boundless occupation for the mind will begin in eternity.

2. Obscurity in religion is also an evident requirement from the point of view of ourselves. The fact that faith is a supreme homage to God demands that there be a sacrifice of self in it; the fact that it is a virtue requires that there be an exertion in practising it; the fact that it is highly meritorious demands that there be freedom in choosing or rejecting it. If religious doctrines were as evident as the multiplication table, they would simply force our assent, there would be no alternative of rejection possible, our assent would not be free. If we had as complete an unveiling of truth as the blessed have in the vision of God, there would not exist the freedom which is necessary for merit. This life is the time to make our choice and struggle to earn our reward. God wishes that our choice should be a generous and trustful one, honorable alike to Him and to us. The supernatural light of His countenance that is shown to us is therefore clear enough for those who wish to receive it, and obscure enough to enable those to resist who will; and so it makes obedience meritorious. Thus we have neither overwhelming evidence nor impenetrable darkness. The obscurity is not so great as to make it folly to believe, nor the clearness sufficient to force our assent. Our intelligence and our liberty have both a full action in the work of faith. Those who make their own will the rule of belief, who have rejected what they consider obscure, and who have accepted certain doctrines simply because they are satisfactory to themselves, have rendered no homage to God, they have not served Him from their own substance, they have no faith, they can earn no supernatural reward.

III. Another thing that removes spiritual truth out of the dominion of man's faculties is, that faith in them is not a natural acquisition, but a special gift of God. "It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy" (Rom. ix, 16). It is irregular and unaccountable in its comings and its goings: for "the spirit breatheth where he will . . . thou knowest not whence he cometh and whither he goeth" (John iii, 8). The aptitude for understanding and holding on to divine truths is specially infused into the soul by the Sacrament of Baptism. Otherwise a

man is called in God's own time, it may be sooner, or it may be later. None can anticipate that time: "No man can come to me except the Father who hath sent me draw him" (John vi, 44). When the light is given them, it is granted as a reward for past constancy and goodwill, or with a view to future profits; it is not vouchsafed for the satisfaction of curiosity, nor for the interests of science, nor as the fruit of simply intellectual strivings. To those who seek in these last ways it is said, "you shall seek me and shall not find me; and where I am, thither you can not come" (John vii, 34). This is the kind of obscurity that many complain of and resent, but it is no discredit to religious truth, for it has been caused by the seekers themselves; it is no obscurity in the truth itself. So we can not say that the sun has lost its brightness when dense vapors rise from stagnant swamps and hide its face.

The gift of God's illumination is withheld from those who persist in using inadequate means for spiritual investigations. Some knowledge is gained by sense alone; as sight, even without intelligence, perceives the noon-day sun. Abstract truths of science are perceived by the intellect; sight alone is inadequate; it is unnecessary, too, but it is useful for the gaining of information. The moral and spiritual faculties are not required for the truths of nature, but they are absolutely necessary for considering the truths of the higher spiritual order. For this purpose the faculties of sense, and even the faculties of the intelligence, and the highest secular training, are quite inadequate. Those who possess these advantages are the most likely to over-estimate their value and apply them beyond their proper limits; and hence that word of our blessed Lord: "I confess to thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to little ones" (Matt. xi, 25). This doctrine that the trained intellect is inadequate for religious judgment is hateful to the proud and worldly, but it is a doctrine full of hope and comfort for the multitudes, for the poor, the suffering, the unfortunate. The obscurity of religious mystery before the scrutiny of science is an implication that God's best gifts are open equally to all, that the ignorant have the same opportunities as the most learned, that spiritual eminence does not follow accidental natural advantages, and that "there is no respect of persons with God" (Coloss. iii, 25). If it were otherwise, the learned would have an exceptional advantage, and the bulk of mankind would be cut off by their station in life from all super-

natural privileges, for they have neither the leisure nor the intelligence for the scientific examination of religion.

There are many who forget that God is not only Truth but also Love. He is to be sought with the heart as well as with the intellect. Reason can do no more than grasp at the skirts of God's garment as He passes by, it is love that sees His face. Therefore so many fail in the search after God; their minds may be acute enough but their hearts are corrupt. Now, the keeping of God's commandments is the measure of love, and he whose intentions are good and whose life is pure, will gain a deeper insight than reading and thought can give. Sin, especially carnal sin, the love of wealth, and pride, are the destruction of the love of God; and without this, the highest intellectual ability will never discover God. Dry argument can never do the work of love, and hence there is such a thing as a sinner or an unbeliever being thoroughly convinced yet not converted.

On the same principle an immoral life saps the faith and leads to unbelief; and the prevalence of sensuality, at any epoch, or throughout any country, produces, as its immediate consequence, an uprising of the intellect against the yoke of supernatural belief. However much religion may be injured by ridicule and calumny, it is undermined most surely by the spread of immorality. Where the chief obstacles of the Church in a country are prejudice and hatred, she can gain admission by degrees to men's respect, dispel their ignorance, and finally gain them over. But where her foes can manage to propagate a spirit of unchastity, there religion must fade out and disappear. The leaders of infidelity know full well that it is not enlightenment that is fatal to religion, but immorality; and they do not hesitate to use against supernatural life a poisoned weapon which will be even more fatal to the natural life of men.

IV. We may justly conclude that there is hardly even a superficial plausibility about objections against religion on account of the incomprehensibility of its mysteries. It is generally but the excuse of those who do not wish to believe, and who want the credit of a sincerity which they do not really possess. There is nothing contrary to reason, there is no abdication of our natural liberty in "bringing into captivity every understanding unto the obedience of Christ" (II Cor. x, 5). Our self-sufficiency and our natural waywardness may revolt, but it is a calumny against reason to say there is any incompatibility between it and divine faith. It desires knowl-

edge indeed, but it is able to recognize its own limitations, and can wait in patience for the day of God's full revelation.

There is no such being as a man devoid of the aptitude for supernatural religion. Every man is made by God and is made for God. Education, heredity, temperament, may place special difficulties in the way, but these are no more entitled to the respectful consideration they generally meet with, than a man's natural inclination toward lying, stealing, or debauchery. God permits these depraved impulses so that we may have matter for a struggle and glory for overcoming. Opportunities of sufficient knowledge are wanting to none. Education, abundance of communication with other minds, the universality of religious practices and worship, the interest and attraction that seem to rise spontaneously for religion, and above all, the grace of Him who "enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world" (John i, 9), all this ensures sufficient guidance to lead every man through darkness to the light.

In the gospels Our Lord never treats the want of faith as a mere natural incapacity for believing, or as excused by the obscurity which surrounded Him. His divine personality, His Incarnation, His authority were obscured by the infirmity which He assumed. There were many presumptions against Him derived from His reputed origin and even from the Scriptures. "Is not this the son of the carpenter?" (Matt. xiii, 55) they asked; and "Can anything of good come from Nazareth?" (John i, 46). His eternal Father's testimony to Him at the Jordan was not understood by all, His manifestation on Mount Tabor was witnessed only by three. The personal word of God in the flesh seems to have been more obscure than His spoken word in His Church. Yet with all His mercy and broad sympathy, Our Lord seems to make no allowance for want of faith in Him. He reproves St. Peter and the apostles. He tells the Jews that their disbelief is more guilty than the sins of Sodom and Gomorrha. He makes no account of the obscurity that surrounded Him in mitigation of their unbelief, but attributes it to their hardness of heart, and resistance to the Holy Ghost. It is not open to us to doubt that, in like manner, many who declare that the light is not sufficient to make the dark ways plain to them, are really sinning against the light and grace of God, and preparing themselves for final rejection by Him.

Those who do not revolt against the obscurity in which God has involved His supernatural mysteries, find their reward even here

below in the fulfilment of that promise: "Darkness shall not be dark to thee, and night shall be light as the day" (Ps. cxxxviii, 12). Through the dimness there come to them rays of a knowledge, more lofty, more secure, more steadfast, more satisfying, than all the knowledge of earthly things. The invisible world is as real to them as the cities where they live. They walk in the presence of God, they feel the gentle guidance of His hand, and hear the murmur of His voice in their souls. They are in union with Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Blessed Eucharist. The spirit of God has really made them His abode and His temples. While they walk this earth they live in the society of the blessed. They "are come to mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the company of many thousands of angels, and to the Church of the first-born who are written in the heavens, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the just made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of the New Testament" (Heb. xii, 22-24).

IX. GOD THE FATHER AND CREATOR.

BY THE REV. THOMAS J. GERRARD.

"Know ye that the Lord he is God: He made us and not we ourselves."—Ps. xcix. 3.

SYNOPSIS.—Instruction.—The dogma of creation has a bearing on practical life. Experience shows the need of such a dogma. Revelation shows the fact of such a dogma. Experience and revelation combine to produce the practical fruits of the dogma.

Exposition. I. From experience: Man knows he is not self-sufficient. The mean between absolute dependence and independence is true freedom. The true sense of dependence felt more keenly in regard to our beginning and last end and in regard to our moral conduct. Moral conscience must come from a First Cause. The First Cause primarily symbolized as a fatherhood; secondly, as intelligent workmanship; finally, as a simple act of will-power.

II. From revelation: Creation in time. Order of Creation. Biblical and physical sciences practically agree. The "vision theory," a plausible explanation. Primary and secondary creation. The special creation of the soul. Points to be remembered against extreme evolutionists. Evolution within certain limits not opposed to faith. The records of both the Bible and the rocks show the same order, viz., the separation of the planet from the rest of planets; the land from the sea; the successive origins of plant, fish, bird, brute and man.

III. Difficulties answered. Absence of evidence. Neglect of Bible evidence. Ex nihilo nihil fit. The difference between particular causes and the universal cause.

Conclusion.—Practical fruits. Knowledge of the supreme majesty of God. Thankfulness to God for all He has done for us. The right use of creatures. The dignity of man. The realization of God's fatherhood and practical consequences of this realization; viz., patience in adversity and confidence in God's goodness.

The first article of the creed is the first article of our morals. We profess our belief in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible. We thereby imply that we have an obligation of acknowledging ourselves the creatures of God, of living and acting as children and subjects of God, of rendering to God our supreme homage, worship, obedience and service. That truth is written both in the hearts of men and the revealed book of God. By neglecting either of these sources of information, confused, inadequate and even false ideas concerning the relationship between Creator and creature arise. Let us then try to look at this truth from the two points of view. Let us first consult human reason and experience and see how our nature demands the truth of

God the Creator; and then let us consult the revealed word of God and see how fully that demand is satisfied.

One of the first instincts of our nature is our sense of dependence on another. The words "dependence," "independence," and "freedom" have been used with varying significations. Man, along with his sense of dependence on another, has a sense of the need of freedom. The exaggeration of these two needs has led to errors in both directions. The exaggeration of the "dependence" notion has led to tyranny and slavery. The exaggeration of the "freedom" notion has led to license and rebellion. There is a golden mean between the two. There is a dependence on lawful authority which is the guarantee of the most perfect freedom. This is the true instinct which man feels.

A man's life-history is a gradual learning of this fact. He is born a helpless infant. All he can do is to experience his simple needs and cry about them. He could not live for a day were it not that the kindly hands of his mother kept him folded to her breast and controlled his constantly erring ways. His education consists of one long series of alternate mistakes and corrections. His dependence on others is maintained right until the end of life. Nay, as he approaches the end of life his dependence on others increases more and more. When he is younger he may gird himself and walk where he will; but when he is old another must gird him and lead him whither he will not.

This sense of dependence felt so keenly in the social affairs of life becomes accentuated immensely when one considers the higher issues: our beginning and our end; our powers of doing good and evil. We feel instinctively that we did not make ourselves and that we do not belong to ourselves. Then our reason sets to work to justify our feeling. We argue back from effect to cause until at last we must come to the Being who is the First Cause of all things. Things can not make themselves. Neither can there be a long endless chain of them with no beginning. Neither do we escape the difficulty by saying that we do not know our origin. The mind can only find rest in the same truth in which the whole human spirit finds rest, in the truth of our God who is Maker of heaven and earth.

The act by virtue of which God brought the world into existence is a great mystery and quite beyond our imagination. The human mind, however, has made various attempts to express the nature of this act Thus the symbol of "parent" has always been the first at-

tempt to represent the divine causality. The first link in the chain of thought by which we go back from ourselves to the beginning of things is the link between father and son. Our first conception therefore of the great Being who was the author of our being is that of a father: I believe in God the Father Almighty.

Alongside the notion of fatherhood there is the notion of the intelligent workman. The work of the great God was manifestly one of vast genius. The artist who modeled in clay was a fitting symbol of the skill required for shaping the sun, moon and stars; the land and the sea; the green herb, and cattle, and man. And so we have a synthesis made expressing fatherhood and makership: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

Yet even this expression was crude as a representation of God's creative act. Accordingly the most spiritual faculty of man was chosen, his will. This was made the final symbol of God's creative act. "Thou hast created all things; and for thy will (*propter voluntatem tuam*) they were, and have been created." By the simple nod of God's will things are produced out of nothing. *Fiat lux*: *et facta est lux*: "Let there be light and there was light." Thus, although there are so many proofs from reason of God the Creator of all things, the proof which touches nearest to the truth and which gives most of the truth is the proof from human conscience; for it is conscience which tells us what is moral goodness and is thus the most perfect image we possess of Divine Goodness. It is by the voice of conscience that we hear most distinctly the voice of the Holy Spirit: "Know ye that the Lord he is God: He made us and not we ourselves."

Turning to the pages of Holy Writ we strike new and rich sources of knowledge concerning creation. First we are told of creation in time. The greatest of pagan philosophers held that matter was eternal. St. Thomas, probably out of respect for Aristotle, taught that eternal creation was not intrinsically impossible. Theologians are divided with regard to this speculation. We know, however, from divine revelation, that the world was not eternal. "In the beginning God created heaven and earth." God's internal activity had gone on through all ages producing the three Divine Persons. Then the divine will sought an external object for its activity. First it produced a world of angels. They had a system of laws of their own; and though many interesting facts concerning them have been revealed to us, their manner of life and action is beyond our under-

standing. Then the divine activity produced our material world. Finally God combined a material and spiritual world in one creation, man; and with man created the world of supernatural grace, raising man to the higher plane of union with God.

Secondly, we are told of the order of creation. Various interpretations have been given to the opening chapters of the book of Genesis. A very plausible explanation is what is known as the "vision theory." A vision may be seen either of present or of future or of past events. In the case of creation the sacred writer would, as it were, look backwards. His description need not correspond with the events in every detail. His vision would be partly symbolical, since he would have to describe the action of God whom he could not see; and partly realistic, since he would have to describe events just as they happened. It is now universally believed that the days were periods of time some of which may have consisted of millions of years. These periods would be presented before the mind of the sacred writer as separate scenes of the vision. Apart from little differences of this kind the order of creation, as revealed in the strata of the earth, agrees with the order revealed in the opening chapters of the book of Genesis.

The word "creation" has two meanings. In one sense it means the making of something out of nothing. In another sense it means the arrangement and development or evolution of that first something into the subsequent forms of nature. There are various opinions as to what extent this evolution took place. A Catholic is allowed much freedom in this matter. One thing, however, he is bound to hold against all extreme evolutionists, namely, that the soul of man was specially created and infused into the body by God. There are other truths bearing on this subject which, though not of Catholic faith, should be insisted upon in the name of science. The two most important are, first, that no one has yet succeeded in producing life from non-life; and secondly, that no one has yet bridged the gulf between reason and sensation. These truths are the two great stumbling-blocks which lie in the way of those shallow scientists who would explain away the dogma of creation by an artificial and exaggerated system of evolution. It is well to insist upon the fact that the records of the rocks show practically the same order as the records of Scripture. First the common substance of the whole universe was produced from nothing. "In the beginning God created heaven and earth." From parallels throughout the whole Bible it is seen that

"heaven and earth" is the usual expression for "all things." "I am the Lord that make *all things,* that alone stretch out the *heavens.* that establish the *earth,* and there is none with me." From the first common substance there is made the division of this planet from other planets, of the world from the sky. Then comes the separation of the land from the water, the two great divisions of lifeless nature. From the germs of life planted in each of these there springs successively, the life of the green herb, and fruitful tree; of the fishes of the sea and the birds of the air; of the beasts and creeping creatures of the earth. Finally man is made by the special creation of his soul and the infusion of it into his already prepared body. The grace by which he is raised to a supernatural dignity is conferred at the first moment of his creation.

There are two classes of objections which are urged against the fact of creation. The first class is based on the absence of positive evidence for the fact. The answer to this difficulty has already been anticipated in the evidence of divine revelation. Were it not for revelation we should not be so sure of our answer, for, as we have seen, the idea of possible eternal creation is one that commended itself to the greatest of our theologians. We can not wonder then if those who reject the express revelation of God find themselves obliged to profess ignorance concerning the origin of the world.

The other class may be reduced to one difficulty, namely, the intrinsic impossibility of producing something out of nothing. It is expressed in the trite formula: *Ex nihilo nihil fit.* This axiom of the old philosophers was formulated out of their experience of particular causes and effects. Certainly there has never been known a particular agent who could produce something out of nothing. But the same can not be said of the universal cause of all things. The fact that God is God and that He is omnipotent is sufficient to assure us that He can produce something from nothing, though how He does it must remain to us a lifelong mystery.

From experience and life we have reasoned to the fact of creation. From revelation we learnt many supplementary truths about creation. Now we may direct our fuller knowledge to a more fruitful life and experience. The first fruit is especially seasonable in these days—a knowledge of the supreme majesty of God. Among many classes, even where the existence of God is admitted, His rights are conceded sparingly, as if man were only a little smaller than God. In Germany there is one sect which has altered the form of the Lord's

Prayer to express this feeling.* They do not say "Vater unser" as of old, but "Unser Vater," signifying that we come first and God second, that we must decide how far God shall exercise His dominion over us. Our appreciation of the dogma of creation, however, saves us from such unspeakable conceit. The new discoveries of astronomy, although they may spoil our childhood imagination of a heaven just on the other side of that blue sky which we see, unfold for us vaster conceptions of the immensity of God and of the magnitude of His creation. It has been computed that an express train, going fifty miles an hour, would take 4,500 million centuries to cross our universe. It can therefore only be the most blind infatuation that can seek to exalt small man to a level of divinity. On the other hand the acknowledgment of our smallness in the midst of God's vast creation is the root and beginning of all our spirituality. It crushes our inborn pride. It makes us realize at once that God is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, who is, who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.

Next will come a sense of thankfulness to God. If it be so true that once we were nothing, that once the present vast universe was nothing, that every phase of life which we enjoy comes from the creative hand of God, then there can be no degree of gratitude too great to express our indebtedness to God. St. Paul may well ask of God's ministers: "What hast thou that thou hast not received?" The same question may be asked of every man, and it is the duty, or rather the privilege, of every man to refer his gifts to their source: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all that He hath done for thee."

The same dogma shows us the appointed way to union with God. St. Ignatius explains it in his famous meditation on the right use of creatures. If God created all things then God alone has supreme dominion over them. Man has only the temporary use of them. Man therefore must use them as God's property. It is expressly written: "The Lord hath made all things for himself." On the other hand the enjoyment of these things is for man, but only so far as God sees fit: "Of every tree of paradise thou shalt eat: but of the

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*"Das 'Unser Vater' ein schön Gebet
Es dient und hilft, in allen Nöthen;
Wenn einer auch 'Vater Unser' fleht,
In Gottes Namen, lass ihn beten."

Goethe.

tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat." Our duties in this respect therefore fall into two classes, the pleasant duties and the unpleasant ones. It is our duty for instance to love all our neighbors—they are all creatures of God. But then among neighbors there are the disagreeable as well as the agreeable. It would be impossible and contrary to human nature that our love should in all respects be the same toward each. We can, however, find different motives, all based on the dogma of creation, by which we can fulfil our duty of loving all men. In so far as our neighbor is agreeable, attractive and winning, he manifests some reflection of divine goodness, and we are said to love him *in* God. In this case we draw near to God through our neighbor. In the other case, however, we must go to our neighbor through God. Knowing that God created him we must believe that God had some beautiful design in doing so and love him accordingly. Here we are said to love our neighbor *for the sake* of God. Indeed the whole order of creatures, according as they are rightly used, is the ladder which leads from earth to heaven.

This middle place between the rest of creatures and God gives to man a great dignity. "Thou hast subjected all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen: moreover the beasts also of the fields." The subjection of the lower creation to man is symbolical of man's subjection to God. It is through the intelligent will of man that God receives the homage of irrational nature. In so far then as man does not use his possessions intelligently for God's glory he fails in his high office to which he has been deputed.

Lastly, the dogma of creation reveals to us the fatherhood of God. The Creator of heaven and earth is God the Father Almighty. The notion of God the Creator implies that we are creatures and absolutely subject to God; but the notion of the Creator-Father implies that we are children and the objects of fatherly love and solicitude. And the fruit of this truth is patience in the misfortunes of life. At each stage of creation God looked upon His work and pronounced it to be good. At the end He took a view of the whole of what He had made and said it was very good. We therefore must believe that God could not create anything knowing it to be bad. This was the truth that inspired the mother of the Machabees to take her sons so heroically and with them to go to martyrdom. The story may well express what ought to be our attitude in the face of the comparatively small troubles which we have to meet. The sacred writer de-

scribes her as possessed of a man's heart and a woman's thought and as thus speaking to her sons: "I know not how you were formed in my womb: for I neither gave you breath, nor soul, nor life, neither did I frame the limbs of every one of you. But the Creator of the world, that formed the nativity of man, and that found out the origin of all, he will restore to you again in his mercy, both breath and life, as now you despise yourselves for the sake of his laws." And when she was asked by the cruel Antiochus to advise her youngest son to save his life, she only bent down to her child and whispered in her own language: "I beseech thee, my son, look upon heaven and earth, and all that is in them: and consider that God made them out of nothing, and mankind also: So thou shalt not fear this tormentor, but being made a worthy partner with thy brethren, receive death, that in that mercy I may receive thee again with thy brethren."

X. THE ANGELS; GOOD AND BAD ANGELS; GUARDIAN ANGELS.

BY THE REV. H. G. HUGHES.

"Who makest thy angels spirits; and thy ministers a flame of fire."—Ps. ciii, 4.

SYNOPSIS.—Point I. The existence, nature, and origin of angels. (a) Their existence. Known with certainty by revelation; doubtful whether possession, phenomena of spiritism, occurrences in lives of saints, would be enough by themselves to prove it to men in general. But we have God's word and the teaching of the Church. Objections answered, viz.: That Jews, and then Christians, borrowed the idea of angels from heathen mythologies. Scripture proofs from Old and New Testaments. The doctrine of the Church in the Vatican Council.

(b) Their nature. Spiritual—purely spiritual. Hence unknown to us except by some intervention from the other world. Instances from Scripture proving the spirituality of angels. Tobias: The Blessed in the Resurrection: Doctrine of the Church. Considerations to help us to form some idea of a purely spiritual being. The power of Intellect and Will. Energies of the soul.

(c) Their origin. Created by God.

Point II. Good and bad angels. Angels created to glorify God and attain happiness by serving Him. Some have failed. Why? They were made free, and have abused their freedom. Pride the sin of the angels. The lesson for ourselves—horror of mortal sin, and especially of pride, which is the root of all sin.

Point III. The Ministry of the angels. Guardian angels. Besides the worship of God, angels have care of man—both of the Church, of nations and of individuals. Guardian angels. Their office in regard to us; our duties in regard to them. Advantages of devotion to our angel guardian.

The existence, dear brethren, of innumerable hosts of angels, of purely spiritual beings, that is, created, as we ourselves were created, by the fiat of the Almighty word, yet more noble than we by nature, and higher in the scale of created things, is a truth that can be known to us with certainty only by means of some interposition from the other world, the world of spirits, to which they belong. Such interposition may take the form either of a divine revelation on the point, or of some sensible physical action exercised, with the divine command or permission, by angels themselves. Of such action, both by good and bad spirits, there is evidence amply sufficient for those who are not prejudiced. There can be no doubt that instances have occurred, and still do occur, for example, of

possession by the devil. Some of the phenomena of spiritism, which is attracting in the present day the morbid curiosity of many, can not be attributed to anything but the malevolent and mischievous action of evil spirits. The history of the Church, and the lives of the saints, present to us, on the other hand, many well-attached instances of the action both of good and bad angels. But it may be doubted—and the skepticism in this matter of those who believe neither in Church nor Bible would appear to bear out the supposition—whether without the express teaching of the Church and of God's written word, such occurrences as I have referred to would have been sufficient to prove with entire certainty to men in general the existence of purely spiritual beings.

But "we have a more sure word of prophecy." We are not left to the teaching of experiences which cavilers might always represent as deceptive, or due to unknown natural causes. God Himself, by the word of the inspired writers, and through the mouth of His Church, has assured us of the fact of the existence of angels, good and evil.

In proposing, then, my dear brethren, to give you an instruction on the subject of the angels, I take it for granted that I am addressing an audience most of whom are firm believers in the authority and testimony of the Holy Catholic Church as the teacher of God's truth; and that those of you who are not Catholics, believe, as we also do, in the Holy Scriptures as the very word of God Himself. Now there is scarcely a truth more plainly and more often written in the pages of the Bible, from beginning to end, than that of the existence of angels. Much, moreover, is there told us concerning their origin, their nature, their present state, and their occupations; so that if we believe in the Bible at all, we must believe in those beings of another world.

This particular teaching of the Church and the Holy Scriptures no more than any other has escaped the attacks of modern criticism. Unbelievers have endeavored to discredit the very strong testimony which we possess in the records of the Old Testament to the belief of the Jewish people on this subject, by representing their doctrine concerning angels as having been borrowed by them from the heathen people among whom they lived in captivity, and particularly from the Persians. But it has not been difficult for Catholic and Christian scholars to show that the people of Israel had nothing to learn from other races on this matter. There is, it is true, a resemblance between the system of Persian mythology and that of the Holy Scriptures in

regard to angels; but it is no more than a resemblance; and inspired authors of the Old Testament had written of angels long before their countrymen came into connection with the Persians. A similar objection has been made against the doctrine of angels as taught by the Christian Church. Christians, it is declared, borrowed many of their ideas on this subject from the old pagan religions of Greece and Rome. The only ground for this statement is found in a fact not always sufficiently taken into account, namely that, not in their doctrines, but in the *verbal* and *pictorial expressions* of their doctrines, the early Christians made use of symbolisms which they sometimes borrowed from the more innocent elements of the old religions. Thus an angel may be so represented in an early Christian painting as to be scarcely distinguishable from the figures of *Genii,* or the figures, for instance, of the goddess *Victory.* But a little examination will show that the resemblance is only external; that there is nothing in common between Christian teaching about angels, and the fanciful, if not evil, legends of heathendom.

Let us turn from such objections and ask what Holy Scripture tells us about the angels. In the very beginning of the Bible we read of the cherubim who guarded the entrance to Eden after the unhappy fall of our first parents. You will remember, too, the heaven-sent messengers who delivered Lot and his family from the wicked city of Sodom. The beautiful record of Jacob's dream has been familiar to you from your childhood; how "he saw in his sleep a ladder standing upon the earth, and the top thereof reaching heaven; the angels also of God ascending and descending by it" (Gen. xxviii, 12). Prophets in vision saw the heavenly country, and the throne of God surrounded by angels, made known to them, it is true, under various material forms and images, but, nevertheless, representing the truth. And, that none may doubt this, that none may suppose that the Old Testament imagery is nothing else than imagery, that there are no real spiritual beings who were represented to the prophets of old, Our Blessed Lord Himself and the sacred writers of the New Testament plainly teach the existence of a world of spiritual beings, created by God, of a higher order than men. "See that you despise not one of these little ones; for I say to you, that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. xviii, 10). "I say unto you, there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance" (Luke xv, 10). "He that shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him

the Son of Man shall be ashamed, when he shall come in his majesty, and that of his Father, and of the holy angels" (Luke ix, 26). These are some of the passages in which Our Lord Himself speaks of the angels; nor must we forget those terrible words in which our Divine Teacher speaks also of the devil and *his* angels. If we look to the epistles, both of St. Paul and the other New Testament authors, we find the same truth constantly stated. "I think that God," writes St. Paul, "hath set forth us apostles, the last, as it were men appointed to death: we are made a spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men." "Angels, and Powers, and Virtues," St. Peter declares, are made subject to Our Lord Jesus Christ in His glory (I Pet. iii, 22). And in those marvelous visions of the heavenly country shown to St. John the Apostle, and written down by him in the Book of the Apocalypse, how great a part is played by the angels!

The teaching of the Church is explicit, as indeed it must needs be concerning a fact so plainly stated in God's written word. "God," declares the Vatican Council (Sess. III, Cap. 1) "of his own free counsel, in the beginning of time created from nothing . . . both spiritual and corporeal creatures, angels, that is to say, and the world, and lastly man, composed of both body and soul."

(b) The nature of Angels.

What, then, is the nature of these beings. The Vatican Council speaks of them as "spiritual," and contrasts them with man, who is made up of matter, as well as spirit. Everything that we read about the angels in Holy Scripture makes it clear that they are not as we are. Except by means of some supernatural intervention, they are invisible to the eyes of the body. Had they bodily frames as we have, we should see them without the need of a miracle to enable us to do so. Not till his eyes were opened by the Lord, not otherwise, that is, than by some special intervention, was Balaam able to see the angel of the Lord. "Forthwith the Lord opened the eyes of Balaam, and he saw the angel standing in the way with a drawn sword, and he worshipped him, falling flat to the ground" (Num. xxiii, 31). The angel who appeared to Gedeon disappeared suddenly from his sight, by which fact he knew that it was an angel who had been speaking with him. "The angel of the Lord vanished out of his sight: And Gedeon seeing that it was the angel of the Lord, said: Alas, my Lord God: for I have seen the angel of the Lord face to face" (Judges vi, 21, 22).

To Tobias the angel Raphael declared that he eat only in appearance, that he had another, a spiritual, food and drink. "I seemed, indeed, to eat and to drink with you: but I use an invisible meat and drink, which can not be seen by man . . . and when he had said these things, he was taken from their sight, and they could see them no more" (Tob. xii, 19-21). The blessed, in the resurrection, Our Blessed Lord has told us, will be similar to the angels of God, precisely because they will be free from those trammels which are associated with flesh and blood in our present condition. "You err," He said to the Sadducees, "not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they shall neither marry nor be married, but shall be as the angels of God in heaven" (Matt. xvii, 29, 30).

In the light of these and similar passages of Holy Scripture and with faithful adherence to her constant tradition, the Church teaches as a sure and certain point of Catholic doctrine that the angels are spirits; that they have nothing material about them. When they have appeared to men it has been by taking, for the time being, some visible appearance. It is not easy, indeed, for us to conceive of a being, an intelligent, powerful, noble being, under any form but that of a man. In other words, it is difficult for us to conceive what a spirit is. Nor is it within the scope of this instruction to enter into an explanation of spiritual natures in general. Yet I may suggest, in passing, a few thoughts that may help us to form some idea of the angelic nature. What is it that is most powerful in man? What is it in man that has produced the greatest events, exercised the greatest influence in the history of the world and of mankind. Has it been brute force; or bodily strength? At first sight it might seem that at least in some periods of the world's history, and among barbarous peoples, this has been so. That it has been so at certain times and over a restricted area of time and place I would not deny. But what really great movement, what accomplishment lasting in its effects has been the outcome of mere brute bodily strength? Behind such movements and such effects we shall always find a master mind; a *will* and an *intelligence,* intelligence to know and foresee, the will to accomplish and to bend other wills to the accomplishment desired. And to which part of our nature do will and intelligence belong? To our *spiritual* part. And if we reflect, the body is a hindrance rather than a help. It has so many necessities; it is so soon fatigued; oft and again "the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

For us, indeed, it is a necessary instrument for the accomplishment of most of our purposes; but one of which we should often like to be independent. An angel, dear brethren, is will and intelligence unhampered and untrammeled by the flesh. How often our soul sighs to be free from bodily hindrances; to feel no longer the fatigue and heaviness which oppress the bodily frame. Such is the condition of God's holy angels. And to take another thought; what intense activity may be exercised in the spiritual part of our nature while the body is still. What wide tracts we can range over in thought; what violent struggles can take place in our inmost souls; what burning desires, what joy, what deepest grief, what serenity and what desolation our spirits can experience, yet none know by any external act what is taking place within. From our own inner experience, then, by multiplying a thousandfold the energies of our souls, we may gain some notion of the vast activities of those spirits whom God has created, unfettered by fleshly bond, to be His court and to do His behests. This, then, is another truth taught us by Holy Scripture and the Church, that angels are purely spiritual, without any admixture of material and bodily elements.

(c) Their origin.

And these powerful spirits were created by God. This is a truth which we profess every time we recite the words of the Creed which is said in Holy Mass: "Creator of all things visible and invisible." In those words we confess Almighty God to be the Creator of all things that are; of the invisible, spiritual world, as well as of the visible universe. The words of the Vatican Council, which I have already quoted to you: "God . . . in the beginning of time created from nothing . . . both spiritual and corporeal creatures," are but a more emphatic and explicit declaration of the words of the Nicene Creed, and of those still more ancient words of the Apostles' Creed: "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth," of heaven, with its hosts of angels; of earth, with its manifold forms of life.

To sum up, then, the teaching of Church and Bible so far, we are plainly taught by Holy Scripture, and by the Church, who is the authorized exponent and interpreter of Scripture, that angels certainly exist, that they are entirely spiritual in their nature, and that they come forth, by creation out of nothing, from God the Author of all that is.

Point 2. Good and Bad Angels.

The Vatican Council, in the place from which I have already twice quoted, tells us what was the end which God had in view in creating all things. "God, of His goodness and by His almighty power, made creatures . . . not in order to increase His own blessedness, nor to acquire any perfection for Himself, but to manifest forth His perfections by the good which He has imparted to His creation" (*Loc. cit.*).

In other words, God made all things out of love; to make them sharers in His own goodness. Necessarily also, He made them for His own honor and glory; for no more perfect end could He have than that; and, being perfect, He must have the most perfect end in view. But the Vatican Council here insists upon the fact that God's honor and glory involves the happiness of His creatures. Again, that happiness can only be assured to them by their loving and serving their good Father and Creator. It is the destiny, then, of all free creatures of God to glorify Him, and to attain the happiness He offers to them, by loving Him and doing His will. And this end is to be carried out by each according to his place in God's creation. The angels were created especially to form the court of the King of heaven; to minister to Him in His own high sanctuary. This, too, is the teaching of Holy Scripture and the Church.

The holy Prophet Daniel saw in vision the Ancient of days. "His throne like flames of fire: the wheels of it like a burning fire. A swift stream of fire issued forth from before him: thousands of thousands ministered to him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand stood before him." What a glorious destiny was that of the angels—to be the immediate attendants of the heavenly court; to surround the very throne of the Almighty God. Truly to hold such an office is to be a prince, higher and nobler by far than any prince among men. And so it is. The angels and princes; each has his own glorious throne and crown.

But, dear brethren, could we look into the inmost courts of the heavenly country, were we favored with the visions that entranced the souls of the prophets of old, we should see that now, in heaven, many angelic thrones stand empty, many glorious crowns have been cast down and trodden in the dust. What does this mean? It means that multitudes of the angelic host have fallen forever from their high estate, and have been hurled down with "everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Those who fell, like those

who stood firm, were created for God's glory and their own happiness. But God would have free and willing service, and to this end it was necessary that his glorious creatures, the angels, should be endowed with free-will, with the mastery over their own actions, with the power of choice between God's service or the worship and service of self. We can gather from Holy Scripture that the sin of the angels was a sin of immense and overweening pride. St. Paul, writing to his disciple Timothy, warns him not to elevate to the episcopate one who is a new convert, "but," he says, "being puffed up with pride, he fell into the judgment of the devil:" into the judgment, that is, into which the devil himself fell. "Satan," writes St. Athanasius, "was not driven from heaven for a sin of fornication or adultery or robbery; but *pride* cast him down into the lowest depths of the abyss." That the sin of the angels was a sin of pride is the common and universal teaching of fathers and doctors of the church. Of the details of that sin; how and in regard to what in particular the angels set themselves up in rebellion against the power of the Almighty we do not know with certainty. Some great theologians have put forth as a probable conjecture that it was revealed to the angels that the Eternal Son would assume to Himself, and raise up to the very throne of God, a nature lower than their own, and that they were called upon to worship Him in that human nature, whereupon Satan, thinking that the angelic nature should have been thus honored, refused to adore, and drew innumerable hosts after him in his sin. But be that as it may, it is a truth of faith that the angels sinned; it is the unanimous doctrine of fathers and doctors that their sin was pride; and it is a truth of faith that they fell thereby into the misery of utter damnation and eternal banishment from God in the torments of hell. "And the angels," writes St. Jude (Jude, vi), "who kept not their principality, but forsook their own habitation, he hath reserved under darkness in everlasting chains." "God," says St. Peter (II Pet. ii, 4), "spared not the angels that sinned, but delivered them, drawn down by infernal ropes to the lower hell, unto torments, to be reserved for torments."

What a lesson, dear brethren, for us! What a warning against sin; against pride, especially, which, indeed, enters essentially into every mortal sin, since in every mortal sin the creature lifts himself against his Creator, and declares *"Nolo servire*—I will not serve Thee—I will do *my* will, not Thine!"

Alas for that unhappy fall! They who were glorious princes made

themselves devils. From that time they have not ceased to hate God and all His works. By their fall they have not, however, lost all the powers that belong to angelic nature; and they exercise those powers, as far as God permits, for the destruction and ruin of man; anxious, if they can, to frustrate, in spite and envy, the merciful designs of God in regard to those favored creatures whose nature He Himself has condescended to take. Thanks be to God that, though for our trial and probation He permits them to tempt us, they can do us no harm unless we willingly give ourselves over to their evil suggestions. Armed with His divine grace, we can extinguish all the fiery darts of the evil one. On our side are the hosts of those who remained faithful; who passed successfully through the trial of temptation; who are now enjoying, without possibility of falling, the vision of God in heaven, and who, by His merciful providence, guard and guide and assist us in our warfare upon earth.

Point 3. The ministry of the Angels. Guardian Angels.

We have seen what is the office of the angels in regard to God. They are the attendants of His heavenly court: they cease not to worship and adore Him day and night, saying Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts. But He has given them also duties in regard to us. They are His messengers; they have charge of the Holy Church; of kingdoms and nations, and, moreover, of individuals. It is the teaching of Holy Church that at least each of the faithful enjoys the protection and aid of an angel guardian; and it is not in any way contrary to Holy Scripture to suppose that every child of man is thus protected. From the beginning the Catholic Church has honored the holy angels, has invoked them and solicited their aid; and it behooves us, dear brethren, to follow this example by being devout to our guardian angel. How consoling is the thought of princes of the heavenly court charged with the care of our souls and bodies; ever at hand to ward off temptation; to repulse the demons, to suggest good and holy thoughts, to protect us from bodily danger and accidents in our coming and going; to stand by us and care for us till at last they shall joyfully present our souls, redeemed and cleansed before the throne of God to receive the reward. We should examine ourselves to see whether we have neglected and forgotten our angel guardian. It is to our interest to invoke him; to second his efforts by our earnest endeavors to avoid sin. How often we frustrate those endeavors by wilfully running into temptation! It is a matter of common gratitude, too, that we should remember him

who has the charge of us; that we should thank him for his care, that we should try to live more in his presence. It is needless to say that the greatest spiritual good must be the result of such a practice. Remembering the presence of our guardian angel, we shall remember also the presence of God. We shall thereby be supported in temptation and restrained from sin; we shall be consoled in affliction and kept temperate in the time of joy: cultivating the friendship of our celestial companion we shall be kept from harmful affection for the creatures of earth; more than any earthly guide and counsellor he will teach and lead us along the heavenly way, until the veil is taken from our eyes, and we shall behold at the last the angel of the Lord with whom we shall praise and bless the Father of us both forever in heaven.

XI. THE CREATION OF MAN.

BY THE REV. JOHN W. SULLIVAN.

"God created man to his own image; to the image of God he created him."—Gen. i, 26.

SYNOPSIS.—Material or physical universe was created in five days. A special day, the sixth and last, was reserved for the creation of the highest and noblest being on this earth—man. His position is above the vegetable and animal world—he is the top mark of God's handiwork. The material questions are what is man and whence comes he. They are questions of the utmost importance. There have been discussions and serious ones about his nature and his origin. He has been given the loftiest title—called the lord of creation, son of God and the like. The belief of centuries is that man is a being composed of two elements—material and spiritual—or body and soul. At one time materialism seemed ready to do away with the spiritual side—and as the pendulum swings from one extreme to the other, so the world or a goodly part of it seems to tend to the other extreme of spiritualism. But intellectual or sentimental fashions can not change the nature of things.

Faith teaches us that we have a body and a soul. Scripture insists upon the distinction between the body which is from the dust and which must return to the earth as it was, and the soul or the spirit that shall return to God who gave it.

Whence came this body of ours? The book of Genesis is very clear. God said, "Let us make man to our image." "And the Lord God formed man of the slime of the earth." (Gen. i, 26 and ii, 7.) The general belief of the Church and the simplest interpretation of Holy Writ tend to the belief that the body of our first parent was an immediate creation by God. There is, however, nothing against faith in believing that the human body is a mere highly developed animal.

Whence this soul? It is the immediate work of God, "and God breathed into his face the breath of life and man became a living soul." This "breath of life" came from God Himself. It is this that makes man the image and likeness of God, it gives him his spiritual element, raises him above the rest of creation, it is his exclusive right.

There is but one God and three Persons, so one soul with three powers—will, memory and understanding. God is an immortal spirit, so the soul of man is spiritual and immortal. Our parents were created in a state of innocence, the flesh lusted not against the spirit—and in His own time, God would have taken them to Himself. They were dowered with gifts of body and grace of soul. Sin entered in and, with sin, death. We, like them, have an immortal soul. True it is weakened with the inheritance of sin, but we must wage the life-long combat with sin, for our soul is valued by the Incarnation and Death of Christ, by the eternal joys of heaven or the damnation of hell.

The feeling that this soul of ours is the immediate creation of God, should remind us of our obligations to Him. While we should treat our bodies with care—for health and holiness go hand in hand—it should always be subordinate to the soul. Our most precious treasure is the spirit within us, and the body will share its eternal death, or will

be glorified in the glory of the soul. The powers and faculties and deeds of the soul that excite our admiration are suggestive of the knowledge, love and service due to the Being of Beings, who is the end as He is the author of this body and this soul.

Five days, in Scriptural language, were occupied in creating the physical or material universe. The milky-way lighted with countless millions of brilliant stars and set as a luminous arch in the violet depths of heaven, the fire of the Lord in the censer of the sun, moon and stars and the uplifting deeps of the blue sky were then created. No less beautiful than the serene firmament that bends over it, the earth with its beauty, soft, wild, entrancing—with its glorious verdure, its autumn splendor, its wilderness of charming hues and forms; and the ocean bathing its shores, and bearing the green isles like many-colored gems upon its bosom, came into being. Then, too, were created those marvelous and numberless forms of animal life, the tiny insect in the limpid waters, the graceful fawn and the tawny lion. But on the sixth day God said: "Let us make man to our own image and likeness." Then was created the noblest and most beautiful of created beings—man. The world-system is a pyramid of which he is the top. The broad earth is the base, on it repose the many and beautiful orders of the vegetable creation. Next rise the orders of animal life, above all humanity, with its various component parts—some lower, some higher—the building apparatus and the sentient organs; perception, memory, imagination that gather and mold the stores of facts; judgment that compares them and grasps the general truths and, above all, and ministered to by all, the spiritualized soul, the divine reason—that united intelligence and love —that image and likeness of God which gathers strength from all below to rise to all that is above, which communes with heaven, with eternity, with God.

What is man and whence comes he? These are questions which have engaged the attention of thousands of our ancestors, and they will continue to occupy the minds of those who will be here when we are no more. They are questions of deepest import to the human race, questions of interest to the philosopher, to the artisan, to us all.

What is man? Who is this son of God, king of creation, glory and wonder of the universe? Is he only a little organized matter, endowed with some movement and intelligence for a short time, an invisible atom in the great whirlpool of life, in the immensity of the worlds? Or is he not rather a composition of two substances essen-

tially distinct and united in one person, the union of a body and a soul, according to the traditional belief of centuries?

Faith teaches us that man is the personal union of a material body and of a spiritual, free, responsible, and consequently immortal soul. Beyond that body, with its exquisite beauty of form, its delicate texture, its lythe movement, its noble bearing, and its wonderful mechanism, all of which can be seen and handled, there is a something which sense can not reach. The voice, the manner, the expression are but the outward manifestations of a something always and necessarily invisible. The delicately wielded scalpel of the anatomist can not detect it in the folds of any human brain; the psychologist's exhaustive analysis of human thought can not draw it into the light. Underlying face and form, speech and action; underlying all that is most private and subtle, is that around which all else is gathered and without which all else would never have been or would cease to be.

Man is a being made up of soul and body. He is in the root of his being a person. He is that which each of us means when he says: "I." He is, or has within the outward form of his body, a personal spirit, or, as Scripture terms it, a being "made to the image and likeness of God." The carefully trained horse or dog may carry instinct forward to the very confines of reason, but it is only a specimen of its kind and it does not reflect that it is itself which lives, it has no consciousness of a personal existence.

The soul in us is a fact, a fact as positive as the sunlight. Each one of us is conscious of it, in the thinking, feeling, determining subject we name self. Moses represents man as springing from the combination of an immediate breathing of God into an earthly body (Gen. ii, 7). And again in Holy Writ, we find Solomon marking off the dust which must "return to the earth as it was," from "the spirit" that "shall return unto God who gave it" (Eccles. xii, 7). We all recall the clear distinction made by Our Lord when He speaks of the "spirit" which, in His disciples, was "willing" from the "flesh" that was weak (Matt. vi, 25). St. Paul's burning exhortation to Christians is that they glorify God both in their body and in their spirits since both body and spirit belong to Him (I Cor. vi, 20). And does not St. James compare faith without works to that separation between the body and the soul which implies the death of the body? (Jas. ii, 26). You are and I am a personal spirit tabernacling in a bodily form. As spiritual beings, we are linked and bound to the

Father of Spirits; as spiritual beings, we take in each other that deep and penetrating interest, that loving and lasting interest, which pierces beneath the outline of the human animal and holds true converse with the soul within. Man is a body as well as a soul. Far and deep into the encompassing frame of sense, the personal spirit strikes its roots. Soul acts on body and body acts on soul. The contemptible body presses down the soul, we are assured by Holy Scripture. St. Peter begs us to "refrain from carnal desires which war against the soul" (I Peter ii, 11). And St. Paul assures us that hereafter the bodies of the blessed will rise in glory, in incorruption, in power; that they will be made glorious with the splendors of the glorified spirit (I Cor. xv, 43). Associated immediately from the first moment of their existence, body and soul are parted only at the moment of death—a temporary separation of companions whose mutual presence is needed for the completion of each other's life here and for the eternal felicity of the hereafter.

Whence came this living, active tabernacle, which we call the body? Whence this spiritual, free, responsible spirit within—whence this soul?

How simple and clear is the account of man's creation as given in the sacred books! On the sixth day of creation, God said: "Let us make man to our image" (Gen. i, 26). "And the Lord God formed man of the slime of the earth: and breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul" (Gen. ii, 7). He formed man of the clay, formed him out of the dust into which he will return, formed the human body divine out of the slime of the earth. Then said He: "It is not good for man to be alone: let us make him a helper like unto himself." A deep sleep came upon Adam, the Lord took one of his ribs and formed it into a woman. Such is the plain scriptural account of the creation of man's body.

We will not raise the question here of the theories of man's descent as set forth by many modern scientists. Various are the suppositions, both possible and imaginable. Could not He, who by the simple act of His all holy will "Let there be" created all things, create man according to the body out of nothing? Could not He who brought the fundamental matter of all things and the human soul out of nothing likewise produce the body of man by His word alone? He who is the guide and support of all creation, could, if He so chose, use already existing materials for the body's formation. He with power omnipotent might, in His wisdom, have allowed a man-like body to

develop itself through a natural process from any animal. But the nature of things indicates a direct creation, and the voice of Scripture and tradition seem to exclude clearly and distinctly any other hypothesis.

This body of ours, whether God created it immediately or allowed it to evolve from the lower order of beings, is but the temple of a spiritual, rational, immortal soul—"and God breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul." What was this body, fresh from the hands of the Almighty, but a lifeless statue? What was it more than the lilies of the field until the new element—the breath of life was breathed into it? What depth of thought in this simple expression, "the breath of life was breathed into it!" "Let there be light" and the light was made suggests no such mighty power, no such infinite love. And yet in our cold and colorless language, it means that the soul was created directly by God, that in that soul man resembles his Creator. He is God's image in his spiritual, intelligent and free spirit. This is his exclusive privilege. This it is which makes him king of creation, and the master of all nature. This it is which makes him spiritual and immortal. From the earth, from the slime of the earth, came the vegetable and the animal life. From God Himself comes the soul of man. This is what the breath of life which God drew from His own mouth to animate man, signifies. This image and likeness of God springs not from material things, it is not hidden in the lower elements to bloom forth as the flower on its stalk, it is not as the body might be, the more highly developed product of an inferior being. It is the noblest part of us. It is the breath of life from the mouth of the Almighty Himself. As the wise man has it: "The dust returns unto the earth whence it was, and the spirit to God, who gave it" (Eccles. xii, 7). Its value is measured by the stupendous truth of the Incarnation and the death of the Son of God; by the gifts and graces of the Holy Spirit; by the perpetual intercession of Our Saviour in heaven where He offers His eternal sacrifice to the Father; by the grace and power of the Sacraments; by the prospects which the eye of faith sees beyond the grave. These are the truths which face the soul and bring to it a sense, confident yet fearful, of its own dignity.

As there is but one God and three Persons in one God, so in man there is but one soul, and in that soul there are three powers, the will, the memory and the understanding. God is a spirit and immortal, His image and likeness is a spirit that will never die. The Supreme

Being is master of all things, so man, endowed with free-will, was constituted the visible sovereign over all the other creatures of this earth (Gen. i, 26). We bear within us this image of our good God, our treasure inestimable, our glory and honor, and too often are we as heedless of the fact, as the mountain is insensible of the inexhaustible treasures that lie beneath its surface. Too often do we forget that the nearer we come to our divine Lord the holier we become; the closer we press to Him, the more like Him we grow; the more we meditate on Him, the more conscious shall we be that we, too, are sons of God. Too often do we fail to recognize the truth that eternal realities do not change with our intellectual fashions, that we are from God and to Him we must go, that we must "work out our salvation with fear and trembling."

Behold our first parents, the result of God's handiwork, clothed with physical beauty and perfection. Happiness unalloyed was theirs in the garden of Eden, heaven without death or decay, in God's own time, was to be their future reward. Pure and unspotted they stood before Him, their creator, no taint, no shadow of sin to sully their innocence. No concupiscence of flesh lusted against the spirit, for spirit and flesh were in full harmony with the will of God. To this was added a wonderful knowledge of natural things and marvelous illumination of faith, all in them tending to and attracted toward God through faith and hope and charity. Made beautiful and truly holy by the divine bounty of their good Father in heaven, they were not dazzled by the splendor of His glory as was Moses on Sinai, for they walked with Him in paradise. Consider this world when God's blessing rested upon its rejoicing dawn; when man possessed and ruled as God's vice-regent this happy, peaceful creation, when his mind was flooded with light, his reason unclouded, his conscience the approving reflex of God's smile. Then reflect that "sin entered in and with sin death." That the moral beauty they possessed was ruined, that the light of their mind was darkened, their reason clouded, and the flesh lusted against the spirit. Their faculties of body and their gifts of soul were weakened by sin, but their nature they did not and could not change. They have left us with sin and its consequences—the present world with its toiling, wearied, suffering multitudes, its broken hearts, its hopeless lives and despairing deaths. They have left us to carry on the life-long combat with sin, but in every struggle Christ will be with us, who never leaves or forsakes those who trust in Him.

We know when and under what conditions our human body came into existence. Each soul is the immediate work of the Creator. He brings forth each soul out of nothing, at the moment when the body which is destined for it enters really and properly on its inheritance of life. Soul and body are contemporaneous in their origin and they have profound and ineffaceable relations to each other. All that we are and have, except the evil which we have wrought and which clings to us, comes from the one source of life.

We see our body, we love our body, we should do so; for it is the home of the soul and, with the soul, it will one day be glorified. It comes from the earth and to the earth will it return. The soul is from God. To know, to love and to serve Him is its purpose here and to be happy with Him forever is its destiny hereafter. Guard it then as a most precious heritage. See that you do not soil that heaven-born spirit within you. It was made immaculate by the cleansing and renewing waters of Baptism, preserve it immaculate till the day it enters on its reward. Let not your passions drag you down to the level of the brutes beneath you. Let the belief that the inmost being of each one of us is created immediately by God, as was that of our first parent Adam, bring us into a full relationship with God, and remind us of our obligations toward Him. It is not in the anatomy and the faculties of the body, but in the analysis and structure of the soul, in the true image and likeness of God, that the greatness of human life is best realized and our indebtedness toward its Giver most deeply felt. Is it beauty of body, earthly splendor or fortune that challenges your purest admiration, that causes the unbidden tears to start from your eyes? Is it not rather when man stands alone in the majesty of virtue; is it not when he suffers for principle and sinks with the last plank that honor has left him; is it not when he wears himself out in labor for his fellowmen, when he lays down his life for his country? Is this the work of the body? No—it is the soul. It is as when the beautiful soul illumines the faith of St. Stephen with angelic light. The comforts and the selfish ease of body are forgotten and the indwelling wisdom and devotion of the spirit are made manifest. What is it but the God-like within us lifting us above the earth and drawing on toward its Creator. By it we are lifted, elevated to the knowledge of God; by it we adore, and love, and serve Him; by it, and it alone, we shall see God. This understanding, this reflective reason, this heart capable of a boundless expansion, this will, capable of being trained to a freedom and

an intensity of extraordinary power; this longing—nay, I might almost say this capacity—for the infinite which is within us; of what are these powers, these faculties so suggestive as of the knowledge, love and service due to the Being of Beings, Who is the end, as He is the Author of this body and this soul.

XII. THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

BY THE REV. DR. C. BRUEHL.

"The dust shall return to the earth whence it was taken; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it."—Ecc. xii, 7.

SYNOPSIS.—Man superior to the universe because he knows himself and is immortal.

I. The soul not material; because it gives life to the body. Objections The soul not found in the dissecting-room but in the glorious deeds of men. Antagonism in our breast proves soul. Faculties of soul: knowledge, free will; neither are material. Consciousness. Therefore our soul a spirit and incorruptible.

II. The infinite perfectibility of the soul requires an eternity. The insatiable desire for happiness demands immortality and God's goodness guarantees it.

III. The universal order requires immortality. No virtue, no order without it; life chaos without it: why does virtue suffer and vice triumph? Explained because immortality compares to eternity. This life not important; its incongruencies vanish. Unanimous belief in immortality. An illustration. Argument summed up. Let us live according to our belief.

Dear Friends: There is a sublime passage in the writings of Pascal. It reads: "When man contemplates nature in its glorious majesty, the thousands of brilliant stars, that whirl in unlimited space, that glorious light, destined to illuminate the world, as a mighty torch; the oceans, filling the air with the bellowing of their waves; that earth, finally, that seems to him so vast and yet is nothing but a dark speck in the universe; and when from this impressive sight he turns his attention to himself, this first look is, indeed, calculated to abash him. For what is he amidst this immensity but a shadow that passes. Yet, this immense world knows not itself; man knows it. He is but a feeble rod, but a conscious and thinking rod." And we may add, when this world shall have passed away, when the sun shall have lost its luster, when the stars shall have grown dim, man will be. He will survive the universal wreck. On the ruins of the universe he will stand, undaunted, strong, youthful, as Scipio on the ashes of Carthage. For man is immortal; he is not a shadow that passes, and the vestiges of which shall not be found; he is not a flower, that fades away and is seen no more; he is not as the grass, that withers and is borne away by the winds. His is a privilege, not

found elsewhere on earth, but only shared by the spirits of heaven, a participation of the eternity of God himself. In his breast is enshrined, as the pearl in the bosom of the sea, that enduring spark of life, called soul, which thinks and wills and possesses itself and can not die nor be destroyed.

This doctrine, the cornerstone of religion and morality, has been fiercely assailed by many; not because it is not well proved and authenticated by reason and faith, but because its opponents wish to shirk the awful responsibilities it entails. And reason is never more eager to seek arguments and beget doubts than when it works in the service of a corrupt heart. It is our duty to place the doctrine of immortality on a firm and impregnable basis, that it may be able to resist the assaults of unbelief and passion. The arguments for the immortality of the soul are drawn from the nature of the soul, the perfections of God, and the universal order.

I. The soul is not material. It is the animating principle in man. It gives life, vigor, its very being and identity to the body. It bestows upon the body beauty, alertness, harmony, activity. The soul quickeneth the flesh. And when it departs the body becomes a ruin; a helpless hull, without helm and rudder, falling speedily to pieces. The eye grows dull, that wonderful quality of the human face, which we style expression, at once vanishes. A leaden pallor creeps over the brow and the face is distorted. Yea; an ungainly sight this body without a soul, this moldering flesh, this dust without its vivifying principle. And we spread a pall over it and conceal it in a grave, to await its reunion with the soul.

But no anatomist has ever found a soul by the use of his scalpel! Aye, this is true; but he would have found it, had he used his understanding and had he not blinded himself to the astounding phenomena he witnesses in the living organism. Seek not the soul in the blood-smeared room of the anatomist; behold it in the glowing countenance of the artist, when inspirations are crowding his mind; behold it in the kind face of the mother, when she sacrifices herself for her child; behold it, whenever you see a man perform some noble, some generous, some heroic deed. Then the whole being beams with soulfulness, and the very body becomes, as it were, translucent with the light of higher aspirations. Nay, ask not the anatomist to show you the soul; but open your eyes and see and feel it in every good and unselfish action. Does not the soul daily in noble-minded men and women sacrifice the body, scorn its con-

veniences, trample on its peevish desires? How could it, were it not infinitely superior to this slothful, comfort-seeking mass of inert matter? No, there is something superior to the flesh in man, that sometimes hates the flesh, goads and lashes it, as a daring knight spurs his timid steed. You behold the soul, you behold it daily in the very antagonism that exists in our breast in the conflict between duty and pleasure; in the struggle and resistance of our weaker nature against our higher purposes. Thus the Bible speaks of man's soul. God formed a body of the slime of the earth. There it lay; beautiful, yet withal wanting something; no warmth, no motion was in it; no pulse was throbbing; no glow of animation softened those rigid features. Then God breathed into its face the breath of life, and man became a living soul. And forthwith this wonderful change. Adam, the man of the earth, leaps to his feet, his nostrils dilate to draw in for the first time the fragrant air of paradise, he extends his arm in which he feels the thrilling sensation of strength, his eyes are lit up by the spark of intelligence, his brow beams with expression, the silvery tide of speech ripples from his lips, every fiber quivers with life, the blood rushes triumphantly in his veins, a jubilant sound of thanks rings forth from his heaving breast. He lives now, because the soul has animated that mold of dust. Therefore the soul possesses life in an abundant degree, because it is life giving. And mark well, God formed not the soul from earth; but He breathed it from His own mouth; He kindled the flame of life in the breast of man by infusing into it a spark from His own bosom.

But we proceed in determining the nature of the soul. It is not matter; this we have gleaned from the fact that it is the source of life in man; it is a spirit; this we will prove from its intellectual powers. A spirit is a simple, indivisible being not fettered by quantity, not subject to the laws of gravitation and space. It can not be reached by material agents; it eludes the rude grasp of the hand. It is the subtlest, most refined, most perfect and most independent form of being. God is a spirit; the angels are spirits; our soul is a spirit.

The soul thinks and knows. It has a world of its own, where it is not dependent on the organs of the body. This world of thought the soul constructs and creates entirely by itself; the organs only furnish the materials. And I say, thought is not akin to any material energy or activity. It is not motion. For it resides tranquilly in the soul, though it soar to the loftiest heights of the heavens or

fathom the darkest abysses of earth. It needs not space; for the entire universe has room in our soul; worlds may be embraced in one idea. It needs not time; for we review the past and scan the future and at the same moment are conscious of the fleeting hour.

Moreover we have ideas of truth, immortality, good and bad, of soul and spirit, of eternity, of God. None of these could impress a material organ; for they are completely remote from sense; they are invisible, intangible, inaudible. They never entered into our ear nor eye, nor ever been felt by our touch. Yet they live and are in our soul. And if our soul grasps spiritual things, it must be a spirit itself.

There remains this most intimate fact of our life. I mean consciousness. The soul knows itself, everything is light in our soul; it is transparent, not to a strange eye, but to our own.

We are in our actions; they are our very own; we see them at their source; we possess and rule, because we know them; we possess ourselves; for we know ourselves. Behold the stars of the sky; they do not belong to themselves; their movements are not their own; they do not know where they will be the next moment; blindly, helplessly, pushed by a foreign power, they whirl through space. Behold the animal, it has some dull knowledge; but this is bound up in its present needs; it reflects not; it is ruled by instinct and impressions; it obeys the promptings of the moment; it practices no self-control; it possesses not itself; for it is not conscious. Consciousness we only find in man; because his soul is spiritual. And only what is without parts can be selfconscious. If there were parts in our soul, these would be opaque and dark as night one to the other; they would be separated by an insurmountable wall. Because our soul is indivisible, without parts, we can be conscious, that is, be present, assist at everything that is and happens in us.

We will. Our soul is free. Nothing in the visible world is free but our soul. Everything has a prescribed and well-defined course of activities, from which it never departs. The laws of nature are unchangeable. Our soul is not subject to uniform laws. It determines itself; it weighs its actions and supremely defines what it will do. There are moments when we defy the universe, resist all the solicitations of pleasure; when we stand at the rudder, steering the course of our actions in opposition to all the currents of outward influences. No force, no earthly power can overcome our will or call from it a response. Not even that subtlest of all forces, the

acute, penetrating action of fire can influence the soul. Witness the martyr; fearless he goes through the flames, his will remains intact, inflexible, free. A universe can not move or crush our will; and no universe can destroy it.

Our soul is a spirit. It has an activity of its own, in which the body does not partake. Therefore it has a being, an existence of its own, which does not share the destiny of the body. The soul can act without the body; it can be and live without it. Whatever destroys the life of the body, does not destroy the soul; for they are not one, but separable. And when that great catastrophe comes, which involves the body in ruin and death, the soul, having its own life, is not implicated in this ruin, but survives. The death of the body does not reach the soul. When the body decays the soul retrenches itself into its inner world, into itself. Nor will it die when once separated from the body; for, being simple, it can not be dissolved. We have no instance of annihilation in the world; death is not annihilation; but dissolution of the whole into its parts. And since the soul has no parts, it can not be dissolved; it can not be rent asunder; it can not be decomposed; it can not die. And therefore we sum up our first point in the words of Holy Scripture: "God made man incorruptible" (Wisd. ii, 23).

II. Our soul is by its very nature incorruptible, resisting all destructive agencies of the world. We may now make the absurd supposition, that God annihilates the soul after it has been separated from the body, that His finger extinguishes the spark He has kindled in the breast of man. We rightly call this an absurd supposition; for why should God create a being, naturally immortal, only to destroy it after a short time? Nay, if God creates a being immortal, He means not to cut short its existence. And we claim that such an act on the part of God would contradict His wisdom and His goodness.

That soul of ours is an admirable being. Its capacities can not be exhausted, its knowledge daily grows larger and wider. Where are the limits of this development? We are conscious that our mind is capable of knowing everything, that there is not a truth which it will not be able to grasp. And after a long, laborious life of study, having stored in our memory the precious legacy of past ages, having perused volumes containing all that men know, we find that we are capable of learning more; that we are not surfeited with truth. Our corporeal eye becomes dull and finally is blinded by gaz-

ing fixedly at the brightness of the sun; however intently our mental eye may gaze at truth, it ever sees clearer and better, and discovers that it has not yet satisfied its desire for knowledge. We continually long for greater knowledge and clearer insight into things and their causes. Yet, how few are there here whose spiritual faculties have been developed to any considerable degree. Will this glorious capacity for truth die with us, will this mind capable of the highest perfectibility be suddenly checked in its evolution, will it pass into darkness, incomplete, unfinished, with the immense regret of not having attained what it could reach? No; God is wise; and when He gives man a faculty for immensity, He will satisfy it by an immensity. Eternity and immensity are the proper atmosphere for the soul; there it may stretch its wings and soar to undiscovered heights; there it will quench its thirst for everincreasing knowledge. Why should God have made that soul so great, so infinite, if it were only to attain to such a low degree of perfection, as men, even the best, reach on earth. No; there is awaiting us in another life that perfection we desire here, but can not attain; for God is wise and He will not allow the work of His hand to remain mutilated and crippled. Everything on earth grows, matures, and declines; not so our soul; it grows, but never reaches its maturity; even to the last breath it grows. Even on his deathbed man is not ripened, not complete; his maturity awaits him in another world; for God's wisdom can not allow this splendid germ to perish and to remain maimed and incomplete.

In our better moments, when all that is noble and pure in us comes to the front, when by some extraordinary victory over the lower self we have honored our manhood, we wish to be immortal, we wish to see the good in us grow and increase, we wish to see the bad wear away and our souls pure, splendid, without alloy, without dross, without even the slightest suggestion of baseness, without the shadow of sin. Shall the struggle never cease, shall the evil triumph? No; a voice tells us the good will conquer, it will grow to a glorious maturity; it will reign in calm and peace forever. Now we struggle to be good; then we will be good, noble, generous, pure without further combat; as a reward for our faithfulness. The good in us will not die, will not be baffled; but it will come to perfection; not here, indeed, but in eternity, where the seed of sanctity and perfection sown in time will grow by the light of the sun of justice.

There is nothing more characteristic of man, than his restlessness.

He is never perfectly at ease, never completely content; ever he seeks something beyond that which he already holds. There is something in man that is never satisfied; a gap remaining forever in his heart, an abyss that nothing can fill. It is the desire for happiness, the longing for something, that will satisfy his soul. The proper language of man is the sigh. At times this sigh swells to a wild groan, when the void in man's heart becomes pungent, when he feels keenly that despite all earthly pleasures his soul remains barren, empty, naked and hungry. And all men feel this discontentment with earthly things some time in their life, even the most sordid and base. It is born with us. It is the natural consequence of the greatness of our soul. God has implanted it in our breast. Has He done so, merely to torment poor mortals? Is it an incurable disease? A feverish thirst, that nothing can slake? We can not entertain this thought even for a moment. God's goodness forbids it. Every natural appetite has a corresponding object. The beast of the field finds what it seeks and rests. Man seeks and finds not. Aye, it is true he finds not what he seeks in the dust of the road, he finds it not during this earthly life; but let him raise his eyes to the sky and to that which is beyond the sky. There is also an object for his insatiable desire of happiness; God's goodness demands it. And since this object is not found and seen in this life, it exists in the next life. Our soul is not destined to be glutted in a short period of time, it will forever drink from the fountain of bliss in eternity. Our soul is immortal; therefore God does not satisfy its hunger in time, but He has spread for it the royal banquet of immortality. And man makes little of time; he forgets the present, he always looks forward; he thinks not of this life; he is preoccupied with eternity. He measures everything by eternity. Yes, man feels it; he is immortal, he will be eternal, and everything else is shortlived. Therefore he seeks not, expects not happiness on earth. Beyond the stars it awaits him: Happiness, bliss and a glorious immortality.

"Whatever crazy sorrow saith,
No life that breathes with human breath
Has ever truly longed for death;
O life, not death, for which we pant,
More life and fuller that I want."

—*"The Two Voices," Tennyson.*

Thus God's goodness is the guarantee of our immortality. It can not be that God lashes and goads us by this wild desire for hap-

piness, only to drive us from place to place, until we sink down weary, exhausted, with bleeding heart and parched lips. He has given us this unquenchable thirst, that we may not dwell at the cisterns of earthly pleasure, but go onward in quest of the everlasting fountain of heavenly bliss. We are immortal, hence there is a desire for unlimited happiness in our soul, which can not be satisfied on earth; we are immortal, hence earthly pleasures more disgust and surfeit than gratify us; we are immortal, hence we wish what is not on earth and what time can not give us; we are immortal, hence God will not scourge us with an aimless desire nor lure us to a barren desert of despair by the mirage of a happiness which we are never to possess.

III. Without the immortality of the soul human life would be a puzzle, nay more, the wild discoherent dream of a maniac. Whereas we discover an admirable order and harmony in the material universe, there is chaos, jarring discord in the moral world. In the former everything is well balanced according to measure and weight; in the latter everything runs riot. The sinner outwits the honest; justice is persecuted; the good designs of the pious are thwarted, not only by wicked men, but by adverse circumstances, as if heaven had foresworn their cause; innocence is hunted down, captured, slandered and starved into submission by knaves; virtue is barely permitted to exist; it is scorned and ekes out a wretched, ignominious existence. Righteousness succumbs, vice triumphs; the pious shed bitter tears and the wicked smile in the broad light of day. This man, though he works and toils day after day, struggles in vain against poverty and sees the pinched faces of his little ones wane. Next door, however, lives a prosperous scoundrel enjoying splendid health, commanding the esteem of his fellowmen and gorging himself with ill-gotten goods. Here is the debauched, whose health does not fail despite his revelries; there lives a sober, temperate man, who drags through life a diseased body.

Why? Why is this? Who can explain this horrible chaos? Indeed, we must say, if there is no immortality, there is nothing to relieve this fearful disorder. Life is a nightmare, a disgusting dream, a monstrous, chilling vagary of a maniac's fancy. But no, there is an immortality to balance and straighten the disharmonies of this life. This life is not the real life; it is but the prelude, the discords of which will be solved in a beautiful harmony of an after life. Upon this huge background of an immortality the disorders in

life become imperceptible; for the long years of suffering of the just are but moments compared to their eternity of immortal bliss; and the prosperous lives of the wicked dwindle into insignificance before their eternity of punishment. Immortality is the key to the riddle of life; it explains everything; throws light on all its problems. And therefore let me ask who is it that doubts or pretends to doubt the immortality of the soul? They who fear this immortality, who dread the after life, because they have degraded their nature, because they have outraged their immortal soul, because they have sown wrath and fear to harvest perdition. But for the good, this thought is consoling, strengthening; it uplifts their hearts, inspires them with patience, nay even joy in all their calamities. They have a foretaste of their immortality, which sweetens and alleviates their earthly pains.

A man who had lost his faith saw a Sister of Mercy. She was young and beautiful and had forsaken a wealthy and comfortable home. Touched at this spectacle the unbeliever asked her: "Dear Sister, would you not be cruelly deceived if there were no life hereafter?" The sister replied, and there was a reflection of heaven on her face: "I do not understand what you mean; I possess and enjoy this coming happiness already in this life." Truly, it lies at the bottom of our hearts, this hope or fear of immortality; the consoling or dreadful certainty of an after life.

Not only would life be a puzzle without immortality; but it would be impossible. Could there be any morality without immortality? If the soul is not immortal, virtue is a meaningless sound; piety is ridiculous; fear of God is nonsense. Indeed if the soul lives not after death, we have reason to fear men more than God. And if the fear of God, the hope of eternal reward, the fear of an everlasting punishment are plucked from our heart, who will conserve order in society, who will protect our property, who will shield our life, who guarantee the truth of our vows and promises? Right and law can not restrain my personal liberty. The sacred ties of matrimony will be dishonored, snapped; the cradle will be deserted, the infant's life will not be safe in the womb of its mother, the family hearth will be overturned; lawlessness will reign; brutal force will be our only protection. The unscrupulous man will deceive, abuse his fellowmen and when earthly justice finally reaches him, he will escape all punishment by laying hand on himself. Without immortality the sick, the poor will be without comfort, wicked-

ness without a curb, virtue without encouragement, society without protection, a prey to revolution and anarchy. It will be wisdom to cast your lot with the sinners, for they have the promise of this life. This is indeed a dark picture; but true and consistent. Life and society will be impossible without immortality. Voltaire, the most frivolous mocker of everything holy, had many a glimpse of the truth. One night his friends visiting him railed at religion, especially at the immortality of the soul, when he interrupted their discourse saying: "Friends, restrain your tongues, lest my servants hear you. I do not wish to be dispatched this night." Do not object, that there are unbelievers leading good lives and not guilty of the disorders I mentioned. This is true; but the great majority of men believe in immortality and they have created an order which the few dare not violate. And besides, the whole atmosphere is impregnated with religious ideas and even the few unbelievers vaguely dread and believe an immortality of the soul. But make the disbelief of immortality universal, then the masses will rise, the foundation of society will rock, the moral world crumble, life will be impossible. For then the good, the righteous, the honest, the virtuous, the unselfish, the self sacrificing, those who are the strength of society, will lose everything by death, and the wicked, the dishonest, the criminal will gain everything.

But let us draw a veil over this horrible picture of terror, into which humanity would be led without the belief in immortality.

Follow me. Here is a son, a good and dutiful boy, kneeling at the deathbed of his mother. Her life is fast ebbing away; he watches the lovelight fade in her eyes. He rises and bends over her face. For the last time she gives him a kind and loving look and then a sigh; she has passed away. My dear friends, tell that boy: "Your mother is no more; all that remains is but this lifeless form; her soul was but vapor; it has vanished." And then for a moment he will forget his loss, a fierce anger at your frivolity will boil in his heart and he will shout at you: "She lives. She loves. She will forever live and love. That glorious wealth of love in her soul will never die. And I know, those kind eyes will once more beam on me again and her soul will hover around her boy." That is the instinct of nature. And that instinct is true.

And men have been firm and unanimous in their belief of an immortality. They have honored the dust of the dead and surrounded the tomb with symbols of resurrection. And whence should they

have this idea and how could they have clung to it, were it not strongly confirmed in their consciousness. Everything in this world belies the idea of immortality; everything passes. And man standing amid graves, standing in one great mausoleum of which the sky is the somber vault, dreams of immortality. Though everything outside of him is perishable, when he enters into his soul, he finds himself confronted by the clear vision of immortality.

The immortality of the soul is thus abundantly proved. We have already named those that deny it. They are the same that deny the existence of God, the same that deny the value of virtue and holiness, the same that wish to degrade man to the level of the beast of the field, the same that grovel in the dust and delight in their baseness. They are the enemies of humanity, that rob it of its glorious hopes of immortality. Where will we find the inspiration for noble deeds, the courage for the heroism of self sacrifice, the strength to resist the many temptations of this life, if we await not a crown of immortality. Yea, our soul is immortal; or everything is involved in darkness: our nature lies, our better self lies, God belies His perfections, all humanity lies, society thrives by a lie and could not exist by the truth, the best men are the greatest fools and the wicked the only wise. Our souls *are* immortal; and this truth shows life in another, conciliatory light. Our short existence is a bridge of sighs stretching over a broad, deep river of misery; but it leads not into the dark gloom of annihilation, but into the bright, blissful realms of immortality. Let us so live, that we may never need to fear immortality and eternity. Let us judge things by this truth, measure the value of things according to this standard; let us not prize what doth not last; let us not seek what passeth away. Let us not flatter and foster unduly this body; but let us take care of our soul; for "the body shall return to the earth, whence it was taken; and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Amen.

XIII. THE SECOND PERSON: TRUE GOD.

BY THE REV. H. G. HUGHES.

"What think you of Christ?"—Matt. xxii, 42.

Synopsis.—I. The question. This is a question which forces itself upon mankind. Its importance. How much depends on the answer.

II. The answer. Our reply is that which Jesus Christ asserted of Himself. Necessity for Catholics to be well instructed in this and all the doctrines of our Holy Religion. The times, and the necessities of souls demand this. Our Holy Father has called for it as the means of restoring all things in Christ. Helping others the duty of the layman as well as of the priest.

III. The Catholic doctrine developed. The words of the Apostles Creed (Art. ii to vii), Christ's own answer to the question which He put to the Pharisees: His reply to questioners of to-day. Early errors—confuted by St. John; turned to good by divine providence—Arianism—its teaching. Definition of consubstantiality—the result. Meaning of the word; explanation of the true doctrine.

IV. Further proof from the New Testament. (a) The incident of Nicodemus. Christ declares Himself the Only begotten Son of God. Force and significance of this expression. "Only begotten." It is a figure taken from human things. Where it falls short of the Divine Reality. Unity and indivisibility of the divine nature. (b) Working on the Sabbath. "My Father worketh till now, and I work." Meaning of this well understood by the Jews. Explanation. False idea of the Sabbath. God works still. Christ Our Lord puts Himself on an absolute equality with the Father in this work.

V. Conclusion. Christ is God. His words to St. Philip at the last supper. Sufficiency of His own testimony of Himself.

I. What think you of Christ? The question.

"What think you of Christ?"—a question, my dear brethren, formulated nearly two thousand years ago by Him concerning whom it is asked; a question imperative and insistent, the tones of which have not ceased and will not cease to re-echo through the world; a question which, whether they will or whether they will not, forces itself upon the attention of mankind.

It is a question all-important. How much depends upon the answer? Is there a Saviour from sin? Is there One who will lift me up when I have fallen; who will set my feet upon the Rock? Is there One to whom I can turn in my misery and defilement, knowing that He hath power to cleanse and save? Is there One to whom I can go in trouble and perplexity, knowing that He hath suffered too,

that He can sympathize, can enlighten, for in Him is all the wisdom and knowledge of God? Is there a strong Helper, man even as I, One who was tempted, even as I, yet One who is sinless, to whom I can look as the perfect man, who hath conquered sin, and death, and hell; who being true man, my brother, flesh of my flesh and bone of my bone, is yet also God, the King Eternal, offering to me the riches of His mercy and His grace, whereby I, too, may become like to Him, and may save my soul? What hope, what consolation, what a fount of courage and joy and peace, if we can answer these questions with a triumphant "Yes!" Whether we can or not depends upon the answer to the question of the Master Himself—"What think you of Christ?"

II. The Answer.

What do we think of Christ? We think and we say, we most firmly and assuredly believe that which Jesus said of Himself—that which the Holy Catholic Church, with the living voice of her continuous tradition pronounces now, and has pronounced throughout the ages concerning her Lord and Master from the day when, in the persons of the holy apostles and disciples, she saw Him, in the days of her infancy, ascending to the "Right hand of the Father." And, blessed be God, to those questions which I have just asked, we *can* and *do* reply with a glad affirmative, because, through the mercy of God we are able, under the guidance of that Church which Jesus Christ established, to answer aright the question of all questions, "What think you of Christ?"

Never, perhaps, was there a time in the world's history when men's minds were fuller of anxious interrogations upon all that concerns human life; its origin, its meaning, its final destiny. This is not an age of quiet, peaceful faith; of acceptance of the teaching of authority. Everything is brought to the test of human reason: not only all theories, but the most sacred beliefs of mankind are cast into the crucible of inquiry. We need not fear the ultimate result. The truth must and will prevail. But there are sad losses in the meantime; the faith of many is being destroyed, and with it the glorious hope of the future, and the love and charity which alone can make this desert earth to blossom with those noble and gracious virtues which Christian charity—Christian love of God and of men for God's sake—brings in its train.

There is every reason then for us Catholics to rouse ourselves; we may not, in the circumstances of our times, lull ourselves to sleep

in selfish enjoyment of the truth which is ours. *The times and the necessities of so many souls—souls, my brethren, dear to God as ours, redeemed like ours by the Precious Blood of Jesus—the necessities of these souls, I say, demand that every Catholic shall be an apostle of the truth.*

You must not leave this to your priest; they have all the work upon their shoulders that they can well perform. You must share their work, under their leadership and guidance. You must be apostles. I do not say that you must throw yourselves into any and every question that is mooted now about religion. No, indeed; far from it. That would be dangerous to your souls and to your faith. You must leave *that* work to those who by their office and by their training are fitted to do it without peril. No: the question of religion and of religious truth is settled for you. You possess, thank God for it, you possess the holy gift of faith: you are firmly established upon that rock; but you can and ought, each according to his capacity and opportunities, to stretch out from your secure position a helping hand to those who are being carried away to destruction in the bewildering currents of a sea of perplexity and doubt. How are you to do this? First and foremost by your good and holy lives; but also by a firm and intelligent grasp of the principles of our holy religion. Not in the spirit of skepticism or criticism, but in the spirit of an humble and thankful faith, you must inform yourselves to the best of your ability, concerning the doctrines of the Catholic Church, your Mother, that you may be able to give a reason for the faith that is in you; that being yourselves "instructed in the way of the Lord," you may not only save your own souls, but help others on the way of salvation. Our Holy Father the Pope, who at the beginning of his pontificate set before him as his object "to restore all things in Jesus Christ," has pointed out the paramount importance of good and thorough instruction in the truths of religion as a means of gaining that great end, and has traced the evils which afflict society within and without the Church to ignorance of religious truth. And on no point ought a Catholic to be better instructed than on the doctrine of the Church concerning Our Blessed Lord and Saviour; the teachings in which she gives a complete answer to that ever recurring question: "What think you of Christ?" There are thousands asking themselves that question, wishing that they could feel sure of the answer, yet feeling that they can not. It is for us, who have the light of faith, who have the truth about

Jesus Christ, it is for us to be so well grounded in the truth that we may bear unflinching testimony to that blessed truth in the face of the world, and so defeat the forces of incredulity and misbelief by the undaunted firmness of our own belief, and the thoroughness of our knowledge of those sacred doctrines which the Church delivers to us, as well as of the solid ground upon which is based her claim to teach mankind the truth of God.

III. The Catholic Doctrine Developed.

"What think you of Christ?" Ah, my dear brethren, a Catholic child can answer that question with a confidence and a completeness that are beyond the power of worldly science to supply to its votaries. Let us recall the words of the Apostles' Creed—that ancient confession of the Christian faith. "I believe . . . in Jesus Christ, His only Son, Our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost; born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven; sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead." There is the answer; there, in simple language, is the faith of the Apostles and of the Church. Jesus Christ; God; the only begotten Son of the Father; Man, too; born of the Blessed Virgin-mother; God-made-Man, who suffered and died for us; who rose again, who sits in glory, in our nature, on the throne of the Godhead; who is the dread Judge of all.

But to-day we are concerned with one point only; but that point is the very central truth of Christianity. "What think you of Christ?" asked Christ Himself. "Whose Son is He?" And they say to Him, David's. He saith to them: How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying: "*The Lord* said to my Lord, sit on my right hand, until I make thy enemies thy footstool?" "If David then call Him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer Him a word" (Matt. xxii, 42-46). They said the Christ should be the son of David; the Christ Himself who stood before them would have them know that He is more. And now, in our times, when men are giving various and conflicting replies—that He was a religious enthusiast; that He was the greatest and best of men; that in Him human nature reached its highest development; that in his quiet childhood the spirit of the old prophets entered into Him; that the Messianic hopes of His race took so strong a hold upon Him that He came first to desire and then to see their fulfilment in

His own person. To these and all such solutions of the great question He Himself, through His own recorded words in Holy Scripture, through the voice of His Church, through her marvelous history and accomplishments, by the lives of His followers and imitators, the saints; by the very power of His religion over the hearts and minds of men, yes, and for those who have come to Him, by the spiritual experience of His mercy and His love—by these and other means Jesus Himself replies to the question: "If I am but what you say and no more, how do all these facts proclaim me God and Lord?" Yes, dear brethren, Jesus Christ is God; the Word of the Father; of one and the same nature or substance with Him; worthy, therefore, of the same worship and adoration and praise.

In the early ages of the Church—indeed from the very beginning of her history, the enemy of mankind raised up false teachers, who would have deprived our blessed Lord of the homage due to His Divinity. A remote tradition tells us that the apostle St. John wrote his Gospel for the express purpose of refuting certain heretics who denied that Christ was God. And he proclaimed the truth in those majestic words with which the fourth Gospel opens:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God." "In the beginning with God," from all eternity, that is, He was with God and He was God. He is the almighty Creator of heaven and earth. "All things were made by him: and without him was made nothing that was made." And that eternal Word is none other than Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ, that is to say, is God-made-Man. The Second Person of the adorable Trinity become incarnate, having now two natures: the divine nature, which is His from all eternity; the human nature, which He took from His blessed Mother and made His own; for "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth" (John i, 14).

God's providence has turned to good the errors and unbelief of men. The great Arian heresy of the fourth century forced the Church to express, in terms of great precision, such as should allow of no escape from the truth by any subtilty of argument, the faith delivered to the saints, and held and taught by her from the beginning. To this end did the Church introduce into the Creed, which to this day we recite or sing in the Holy Mass, a word which for all times secures her doctrine against all misconception and all elusiveness of

error. Jesus Christ, she proclaims, is *consubstantial* with the Father. The Arians were willing to exalt Christ high above all other creatures, but they denied His Godhead. They asserted that the Word was a creature, though the highest of creatures; made before all worlds, most perfect and closest to God of all created beings; worthy indeed, by His excellence, of the title "Son of God," nay, even to be called divine by reason of a certain mysterious participation of divinity conferred upon Him. Further, some of the Arian body were willing to go still further, and to say that the Word of God, Jesus Christ, possessed a nature *exactly similar* to the nature of God the Father. And we must keep in mind that they said this of the nature of the Word of God as He was before the Incarnation. To all these subtilties the Church had but one answer: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;" and this doctrine of St. John she caused to be enshrined in that word *"consubstantial."* Not the highest of creatures, not possessing a participation of divinity conferred upon Him; not even of a nature *similar* in all respects to that of the Father—no—none of these statements would satisfy the Church; none of them would she nor could she admit of as reconcilable with the Holy Scriptures of which she and she alone is the authorized interpreter, or as consonant with her divinely guided teaching from apostolic times. No! The Word is *consubstantial* with the Father. What does that mean? It means, dear brethren, that there is but ONE divine nature, and that this one single divine nature is equally possessed of Father, Son and Holy Ghost; not divided or shared out among the Three, but wholly and entirely possessed by each one; so that the Father is all that is God; the Son is all that is God, and the Holy Ghost is all that is God. That divine nature, that Godhead, then, which Jesus Christ Our Lord has is the very same identical and single divine nature or Godhead as that of the Father. In other words, there is one God, and the Father is that God; the Son also is that God, and the Holy Ghost is that God. Three Persons, but one God.

"Glory be to the Father, *through* the Son, and *in* the Holy Ghost" so Arius taught his followers to sing; "Glory be to the Father *and* to the Son *and* to the Holy Ghost" is the song, at once an aspiration of praise and a confession of the true faith, which the Holy Catholic Church puts into our mouth.

And, dear brethren, He, that gracious One, on whom all our hopes are stayed; He our Saviour; He who knelt in agony and

hung upon the Cross; He who lives in heaven now to make intercession for us—He is that Son of God, God Himself, consubstantial with the Father, one with the Father and the Holy Ghost, who with Him are one God in Three Persons. "What think you of Christ?" He is the God of heaven and earth, made man for us and for our salvation.

"Who is Jesus Christ?" we ask our children in the simple words of our Catechism. "Jesus Christ is God the Son made man for us," they reply. "Is Jesus Christ truly God?" "Jesus Christ is truly God." "Why is Jesus Christ truly God?" "Because he has one and the same nature with the Father."

IV. Other Proofs from the New Testament.

But now let us gather from the New Testament some of the many proofs that confirm our faith in the Divinity of Our Lord Jesus Christ. I have quoted to you already the words in which St. John sets forth, in no uncertain tone, the central truth of Christianity; and the words in which our blessed Lord Himself put the Pharisees to silence, so that "no man durst ask Him any more questions." St. John, in the third chapter of his Gospel, sets before us a pathetic account of a ruler in Israel, who, struck by the miracles of Jesus, came secretly by night to interrogate Him. "There was a man of the Pharisees," we read, " Nicodemus by name, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night, and said to him: Rabbi, we know that thou art come a teacher from God: for no man can do these signs which thou doest unless God be with him." Then our blessed Lord spoke to him of the new birth, the birth of Baptism, "of water and the Holy Ghost," concluding His discourse in these words: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him may not perish, but have life everlasting. For God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in him may not perish, but have everlasting life. . . . He that believeth in him is not judged. But he that doth not believe, is already judged: *because* he believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of God." I have chosen this text out of many for the reason that in it Our Lord insists upon that fact which the Church proclaims in her use of the word "consubstantial." Jesus declares Himself to be the "Only-begotten" Son of the Father. He, Our Lord says, who believes this will not be judged—that is, will not be judged with the judgment of condemnation; he that pertinaciously and wil-

fully refuses to believe this fact is already judged; already condemned in that, by his unbelief, and so long as he remains in his unbelief, he withdraws himself from the way of salvation.

What, then, is the force and significance of the expression twice used here by Jesus Christ concerning Himself? The Only-begotten Son of the Father? Even God Himself, dear brethren, speaking to men, must make use of human language; must present divine truths to us under figures of things which we understand. Calling Himself the Only-begotten of the Father, He teaches us that He, and He alone, stands in a similar relation to His heavenly Father as an only child does to an earthly father. And what is that relation? A son is begotten by his father; the father communicates to his child his own nature—human nature, that is. I and you are human beings because our parents were human beings, and communicated to us the same nature that they themselves possessed. So, then, when Jesus Christ tells us that He is the Only-begotten Son of God, He tells us that He possesses the same nature as His Father. Human nature, indeed, is multiplied in many individuals of the species; and it is here that the figure used by Our Lord falls short of the divine reality, as all human language must necessarily fall short of things divine. But reason comes to our aid, and we are able, in the light of faith and by the aid of other revealed doctrines, to see where the figure fails. The divine nature, we know, is one and single—though belonging equally to Father, Son and Holy Ghost. It is not multiplied. So, then, for Jesus Christ to say that He is the Only-begotten of the Father is equivalent to asserting that He is very God, that He is of the same, one, identical substance or nature as His Father; and this, indeed, is the truth which He teaches us in His words to Nicodemus.

Turn to the fifth chapter of this same Gospel of St. John. It is the Sabbath day. Our blessed Lord has just healed a paralytic. "Therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, because he did these things on the Sabbath. But Jesus answered them: *My Father worketh until now, and I work.* Hereupon, therefore, the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he did not only break the Sabbath, but also said God was his Father, making himself equal to God" (John v, 16, 18).

The Jews, dear brethren, showed by their action that they understood the significance of these words better than many a Christian of to-day who perhaps reads them in but a cursory manner. In

truth, they contain a definite statement by Our Lord of His perfect equality with the Father. The Jewish people had formed a false idea of the Sabbath, leading them to an absurdly rigorous code of laws concerning what was lawful to do on the Sabbath day. Misunderstanding the statement of Holy Scripture that God rested on the seventh day from the work of creation, they lost sight of the truth that nevertheless God is always acting, preserving, sustaining His creation, so that, as St. Paul tells us, "in him we live, and move, and are." Our Lord would recall to their minds that God is ever working in His creation; that nothing could exist without the active concurrence of Him who "upholds all things by the word of his power" (Heb. i, 3); that in all physical laws, as well as in all the movements of the spirit, God is acting, preserving, upholding, moving His creation. And in this continual action of God He associates Himself on a perfect equality with His Father; and from the fact of God's continual activity justifies His own action. God did not cease to act on the seventh day: I cease not to act. "My Father worketh till now, and I work" (John v, 17). The Jews understood Him. To their mind, who heard Him speak, He claimed divinity and nothing less. Our Lord, far from receding from His claim, goes on in the following verses to emphasize it. Time will not allow me to quote the whole passage, but the conclusion must not be passed over: "He who honoreth not the Son, honoreth not the Father who sent Him."

V. Conclusion.

Yes, dear brethren, Jesus Christ is God. This is the doctrine taught concerning the coming Messias by the prophets of old time; this is His own testimony of Himself. At the last supper, Philip said to Him: "Show to us the Father." "Have I been so long a time with you; and have you not known me?" Here Our Lord implies that they ought to have known; that He had already told them with sufficient plainness. "Philip," He continues, "he that seeth me seeth the Father also. How sayest thou, show us the Father? Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in me?"

The testimony of His enemies shows that He made this claim. Miracles and the fulfilment of prophecy establish its truth. The Church from the beginning has taught it; yes, and the work of Jesus in the world to-day, the work of His Church, the lives of His saints attest the power of her name and prove that He is divine.

An objector might say—you are proving the divinity of Jesus

chiefly from what He said of Himself. Yes, in part that is true. Like Himself, we appeal also to His works; but, granting the objection we may ask, and with confidence ask: Is He not to be trusted? The greatest enemies of the doctrine of His divinity have freely acknowledged that His character is simply perfect. "We often ask ourselves," says a modern Catholic writer (Père Rose, O.P. Studies on the Gospels. Intro. p. xvi), how men . . . can possibly fail to understand how they destroy (Jesus) when they suspect His sincerity, representing Him as a visionary, the victim of the most monstrous illusions." And again: "How can these critics not see that the more they exalt the man in Jesus Christ the more they strengthen the testimony He gave of Himself touching His celestial origin, His divine sonship"? (ib.)

Yes, indeed. By the confession of all, the life of Jesus was a perfect life: there is no flaw to be found in it. He said that He was God; and we believe Him. And if that is not enough to satisfy an honest mind we may say to such what He Himself said to His slow-minded disciple: "Believe you not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? Otherwise believe for the very works' sake" (John xiv, 11, 12).

XIV. THE INCARNATION.

BY THE REV. THOMAS F. BURKE, C.S.P.

"Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and in habit found as a man."—Philippians ii. 6, 7.

SYNOPSIS.—I. Introduction: The Incarnation the corner-stone of Christianity. All other Christian beliefs dependent upon it. What proves the Incarnation proves the divinity of Christ. We shall see (a) what the Incarnation means; (b) some reasons for its acceptance; (c) its bearing upon our lives.

II. The meaning of Incarnation. (a) The name of Christ brings the idea of one who was not only a man but also God. (b) The literal meaning, the union of two natures in one person. Explanation of Nature and Person. (c) Four distinct ideas in the doctrine of the Incarnation. The definition of it in the Athanasian Creed. (d) The benefit to the world from acceptance of this fact.

III. The Scriptures witness to the Incarnation. (a) Against those who have denied the Godhead in Christ the Church brings the statements of apostolic witnesses. (b) Against those who have denied in one respect or another the complete manhood in Christ, the Church likewise brings apostolic witnesses. (c) The whole life of Christ bears witness to the union of the divine and human natures in the one Divine Person.

IV. Bearing of the Incarnation on our lives. In that it shows God's great love for man and also reveals man's true dignity, it incites us to lead lives worthy of our eternal destiny.

1. The cornerstone of the whole structure of Christianity, my dear brethren, is the fact of the divinity of its Founder. Upon that fact is based the authoritative character of all Christian teachings; and whatever we accept as essential to the gaining of eternal life is considered essential for the very reason that it was proclaimed by a Divine Voice. Useful and beautiful though other doctrines may be in themselves, their value rests upon the truth of this primary one, the divinity of the Saviour. As in the solar system, all things are centered in the sun, dependent upon it for their very existence, and as all things would fail with the going out of its light and the ceasing of its heat, so all the dogmas of our faith are centered in Christ's divinity, and were that great fact removed, they would be worthless, in fact they would cease to exist.

The word which has been chosen to denote the accomplishment of this great mystery of God's coming upon earth is "Incarnation."

In a sense we may consider the manner of its accomplishment apart from the fact, though necessarily in such a consideration the fact itself is supposed. Thus, in the natural world, for example, our thought may be concerned with the fact of electricity or with the manner of its generation; or, again, we may dwell upon the fact of a falling body, or upon the reason for this phenomenon. Thus, too, to take another Catholic doctrine, we draw a distinction between the fact of Christ's real presence in the Blessed Sacrament and the process by which it is brought about, namely, transubstantiation. In such a way we may, too, distinguish between the divinity of Jesus Christ and the manner in which that fact is brought about, namely, Incarnation.

On the other hand, however, it must be clear that whatever goes to establish the Incarnation is likewise a proof of Christ's divinity, for the former includes the latter, just as whatever proves transubstantiation is a valid argument for the real objective presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.

With this preliminary then, it is well for us, in a day when, among many, if the Incarnation is not entirely denied it is at least but vaguely understood, to recall the Christian doctrine upon this subject, to see at least some of the reasons for its acceptance and to understand something of the wonderful bearing it has upon our lives.

2. When the name of Jesus Christ is mentioned there naturally rises before us the vision of a man who trod this earth centuries ago in living flesh and blood; there comes the figure of one who drew men to Himself, who won men by the gentleness of His manner, by the kindness of His words, by His teaching of the future life; of one who, more than all other teachers and prophets combined, exercised an influence for good upon humanity; of one who in His life and conduct brought again to light the truth and power that were lying dormant or corrupted in the intellect and the heart and the will of man. All admit that Christ was a human being. Born of woman, He grew from childhood to youth and manhood. He lived, He suffered, He died as man. But the ages in which Christ has been preached and the multitudes to whom Christ has been made known unite in proclaiming Him to be more than man—even to be God Himself. Voices of opposition indeed have been heard in the land, but the great multitude of Christian peoples are united in accepting Christ as the Incarnate Son of God.

What does that belief mean? Literally, incarnation means the

taking on of flesh. Applied to the Son of God, it is that act by which the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity came upon earth and took to Himself a human nature such as that which we possess. This does not mean that human nature became divine nature, for this would be a contradiction in terms. It means that the Divine Person, in whom the divine nature is complete, united to the divine nature in that one person, the nature of man, so that we have the mystery of the two natures, that of God and that of man existing in the one Person who is divine.

Nature and person—let us see if we can grasp a little of the meaning of these words. As I look about me in this church to-day, I see a number of human beings. All of you have something in common, something that is a distinguishing mark, that separates you from all other creatures, from the angels in heaven and from other species or kinds of beings upon earth; a something that makes you to be what you are, namely human beings. This something we call human nature.

I can see further that this human nature is complete in each individual. Thus you do not attribute your actions to another, or to the race in general, but you attribute them to yourself. You say of these acts, whether you performed them to-day or ten or twenty or more years ago, "I did them." You feel and realize that they belong to you individually. Now this condition in which a being is responsible for his acts, whether they be moral, or physical or intellectual, is called personality. In the human being, nature and personality are one.

Again, if I consider this human nature, I find that it is two-fold: it is partly spiritual and partly material; it is composed of body and soul. All actions, however, whether they spring principally from the soul or from the body, are attributed neither to the one nor to the other alone, but to both combined, forming the one responsible person. Thus though it is the body that eats, you say: "I eat." Thus, though it is the soul that thinks, you say: "I think." Now this union of soul and body in man has been used as an illustration—for there is a likeness—of the union of man and God in Jesus Christ. The Athanasian Creed puts it thus: "As the rational soul and the flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ." In the incarnate Christ there exist two natures, that of God and that of man, united in One Person, and since that Person is divine, all His actions are of a divine character. This Person was always God, existing

throughout eternity, the Second Person of the blessed Trinity. In time He became man for the glory of God and the redemption of mankind.

Summing up this, the Catholic doctrine of the Incarnation, it can be seen that there are contained in it substantially, four distinct ideas. First, Jesus Christ is very God, equal to God the Father and God the Holy Ghost, possessed of all the divine attributes, power and majesty. Secondly, Jesus Christ is man, having a body and soul like ours, endowed with all human faculties. Thirdly, while Jesus Christ is both God and man, God from eternity, made man in time, yet He is but one Person, one individual Being, and that Person is divine. Fourthly, the manhood possessed by Christ, though it is really assumed into the Divine Person, still remains entirely human, so that in respect of His manhood Christ is of one substance with us. Words could not more clearly state this doctrine than the definition used in the Athanasian Creed: "The right faith is that we believe and confess that Our Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, is both God and man. He is God from the substance of the Father, begotten before all ages; and man from the substance of His mother born in time; perfect God, perfect man, subsisting of a rational soul and human flesh; equal to the Father according to His Godhead; less than the Father according to His manhood; who though He be both God and man, nevertheless is not two but the one Christ; one, not by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh but by the taking of manhood unto God; one altogether, not by the confusion of substance, but by unity of person. For as the rational soul and the flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ."

Such the doctrine of the Incarnation which the Catholic Church has steadfastly proclaimed and unflinchingly defended. Its very existence through the many centuries of human change and against numerous attacks stamps it with the seal of truth. For it is as much beyond man's invention as the sun is beyond the eagle that soars into its light. That He who is God, who "thought it not robbery to be equal with God," should "empty himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men," could have been conceived only in the Divine Mind, as it could have been accomplished only by the Divine Will. To my mind, one of the greatest proofs of its truth is to be found in the benefit that has accrued to mankind from its acceptance during the past nineteen centuries. We who live with centuries of Christian civilization behind us can scarcely appre-

ciate at first glance the change that has been wrought in the world. Could we, however, but conjure up the vision of past paganism with its terrible immorality and degradation, so low that we wonder that man even without grace could descend to it, and contrast this state of things with the civilization of to-day, even with its spots of leprosy, we would realize that only a fact which is divine could have brought about the change. Whether men acknowledge it or not, the nobler realities of our present civilization, the higher moral standards by which men are judged to-day, testify to the coming of the Son of God upon the earth as man.

3. The fact of the Incarnation is borne witness to in the Sacred Scriptures. Because, at various times in the history of Christianity opponents have attacked this doctrine in one point or another, the Church has defined and declared exactly its meaning; but all of her decisions have been based upon the teaching of the apostles. In all her declarations it is to be noted that she has ever preserved that which shows the great beauty and glory of the mystery, namely, the perfect union of God and man.

If with Arius of old some deny that Christ was truly God, assigning to Him the place as it were of a demi-god, making of Him the most perfect of all creatures, but still allowing Him to be only a creature, the Church summons the witnesses of apostolic days to proclaim the truth. She calls upon the greatest defender of Christ's divinity, St. John, and he bears testimony, for he says that the Word, who is Jesus Christ, "was with God, and the Word was God." In his Apocalypse, that revelation vouchsafed especially to him, he pictures Christ as the Lamb receiving the worship that is given to God: "To him that sitteth on the throne and to the Lamb, benediction and honor and glory and power forever and ever" (Apoc. v, 13).

She appeals to St. Paul, who staked all upon his belief in Christ's divinity and he gives testimony of his faith in the Godhead of Christ when he states that He who is the Redeemer is He "who is over all things God blessed forever" (Rom. ix, 5), and when he proclaims that Jesus Christ "thought it not robbery to be equal with God" (Phil. ii, 6).

She calls upon the apostolic writers in general, and to those who read the New Testament with open eyes and unprejudiced mind, it is evident that these pioneers of Christianity are agreed in identifying Christ with the Lord of all things, with the Jehovah of the Old Testament.

Or, if some, admitting that Christ is God, on the other hand deny to Him true human nature either in its entirety or in part, the Church is just as jealous in guarding this side of the truth, again appealing to the teaching of Christ's chosen messengers. Thus, when she condemned the teaching that declared there was in Christ no human soul such as that which exists in man, when she declared false the assertion that the human nature was lost and swallowed up in the divine, and when again she inveighed against the opinion of the Monothelites, who would curtail the human faculties of Christ, she invented no new doctrine but simply reiterated the first teaching of Christianity. She cites the evangelists who continually insist upon the humanity of Christ in the complete sense of that word; who depict the Saviour as a Man who knew with a human mind, who obeyed and served with a human will, who prayed with a human soul. She cites St. John, who, without equivocation or reserve, says that "the Word was made flesh;" who asserts that Jesus Christ "is come in the flesh" (II. John, 7). She cites St. Paul, who says that the Son of God "emptied himself, taking the form of a servant" (Phil. ii, 7). Or again, she cites St. Peter, who speaks of Christ's human spirit side by side with His human body (I. Pet. iii, 18). Indeed, in all the New Testament there is nothing clearer than Christ's true and complete humanity, and as a matter of fact, however many have assailed the divinity of the Saviour, few, especially in later days, have questioned His humanity.

The whole life of Jesus Christ, from Bethlehem to Calvary, is replete with proofs that show forth the double, yet single, truth of the Godhead and manhood united in one person. Enter the stable at Bethlehem and you behold, lying upon the straw, an infant, born of woman, a man like unto all men; but you behold also a God whose coming the angels announce and who receives the adoration of the shepherds and the kings of the East. Gather with those who witness the baptism of the Saviour in the Jordan, and you behold a man, one who has taken to Himself the likeness of sin, but you behold also a God for whom the heavens are opened, upon whom the Holy Spirit descends, and of whom the Father says: "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." Go with Him out into the desert, and you will witness a man who hungers and thirsts, but you will witness also a God who is ministered unto by angels. Journey with Him throughout Judea and you will see a man who lives as other men, who, in fact, lives a life of poverty, who grows weary under

his burdens, who is despised, hated and pursued by some, even unto death, but you will see also a God who cures the sick and, of His own power, raises the dead to life. In the garden of Gethsemane you behold the man stricken to earth in an agony of blood, saddened, sorrowful even unto death, but you also behold the God whose voice alone strikes back His captors and whose word cures the wounded soldier. Upon the Cross you behold the man, who is terribly tortured, who suffers the woful agony of thirst, who is deserted and left desolate, but you also behold the God with whose suffering nature itself sympathizes and who, on the third day, is to rise from the dead, giving thus the greatest proof of His divinity.

To us this mystery has a wonderful meaning. That God should redeem man at all, that He should make atonement for the sins of mankind, is an evidence of infinite mercy. But that God should have chosen this special way, the Incarnation of His Divine Son, is an evidence of His stupendous love for the creature of His hand. It is the answer of heaven to the cravings, the longings of man, an answer to be conceived only in the Divine Mind. Religion, in its very essence, implies a loving creature and a loving God; and the history of man's spiritual life has been a series of cravings and a series of answers.

In the offerings of Cain, when he placed before the Lord the fruits of the field, or of Abel, when he presented the firstlings of his flock; in the ritual observances of the chosen people, in the blood of sacrifice, in the victim of the holocaust; in the glories of the temple of Solomon; in the lowly catacombs of Christianity's dawn, in the mediaeval miracles of stone; in the rude worship of the uncouth barbarian and the humble offering of the untutored savage; in the monumental tributes erected by Greece and Rome to their pagan deities; in Egypt's enduring walls of Thebes and Karnak; in all these we detect the great desire of man and look upon the silent witnesses to the everlasting craving of man's heart for God.

And God has come to man in many and in various ways; not only in the ordinary and usual visitations of His grace to individual souls, in the inspirations and spiritual evidences of His presence, but also in extraordinary and, we might say, physical manifestations. Read in the word of God of the many such favors granted to man, and we must exclaim: "Truly, God is Love." Behold how in some palpable and real way, though it is not given us to understand, God walked in the garden of His created paradise and spoke with man.

Again, learn of the great vision of God with which Jacob was favored at Bethel; and how the heavens were opened to Abraham and Moses in the apparitions of God that were accorded them; and we must say: "God is Love." Or yet again, learn how in the desert journeyings of the Israelites, God was present always in a visible manner, by day in the form of a cloud and in a pillar of fire by night; learn how when Solomon's temple, in all its beauty, was dedicated to God's honor, the glory of the Lord, the visible symbol of His abiding presence, filled all the sanctuary, and we must say: "God is Love."

All these, however, grand and sublime though they be, fade away before the light and splendor of His latest coming: all these evidences of God's love and desire for man are obscured by the glory of that mighty love that shines forth in the Incarnation. Prostrate before the God made Man, with a knowledge that was not accorded of old, with a devotion to which even the patriarchs and prophets were strangers, with a sympathy that strikes a note of sweetest friendship, with an affection that transcends all other tributes of man, we can now exclaim with the highest and sublimest meaning: "God is Love."

However little we may understand of the deep mystery of the Incarnation, this at least we can grasp, that it is an expression of God's desire to be with man and the recognition of man's desire to be with God. "God so loved the world as to send His only begotten Son." "He came not to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by Him." "He came that all may have life and have it more abundantly." The promise spoken by God in the beginning of the human race is now fulfilled; the fact proclaimed by the lips of the ancient seer: "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son," is now accomplished; the prophecy uttered of old is now, in the truest and strictest sense, fully realized, and God is become our God with us, our Emmanuel.

In His Incarnation, Christ likewise reveals the true dignity of man. He comes in human flesh. Lowly indeed is His condition, but even in that there shines forth the more the glory of His love and man's true greatness. In the Incarnation and in it alone we can conceive man's high estate. This glorious mystery is the only title of nobility that mankind can claim. Without it we could scarcely have any faith in man's destiny of goodness and happiness; without it the dread veil of sin and crime would obscure the essential beauty

of the soul; but with it, we are enabled, through the power of God's revelation, to divest man of the garb of wretchedness, to unclothe the meanest and the lowest of the vesture of crime and guilt, and to behold, emerging from its habitation of sin, a soul made for eternal life with God.

And in all this revelation that comes to us in the Incarnate Christ, there is established in our hearts the desire, and in our wills the power, to live ever a purer and holier existence, until not only putting aside sin, but also putting on the beauty of ever-increasing goodness, we shall become in truth children of the Most High.

XV. THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION.

BY THE REV. J. H. STAPLETON.

"Many daughters have gathered together riches: thou hast surpassed them all."—Prov. xxxi, 29.

SYNOPSIS.—I. The devotion which Catholics pay to the Blessed Virgin is explained by the fact that they love her; they love her because through faith they know her. Enlightened faith does but serve to make us more devoted to her. Our faith is enlightened by knowledge of what we believe and of the reasons for our believing.

II. The object of our belief. Negative: The Immaculate Conception is not to be confounded with the mystery of the virgin birth; it is not a mere purification; it refers not to her parents nor does it change her nature of creature. Positive: It consists in the privilege of being exempt from original sin.

III. The reasons of our belief. Immediate: The authority of the infallible Vicar of Christ. Remote: The belief, practice, and teaching of the Church from the beginning, exemplified in the doctrine of the Second Eve, crystallized finally in the definition of the Church. Again the instinctive sentiment of Christians refuses to brook the contrary teaching.

IV. Conclusion.

Preamble.—A stranger in our churches, unacquainted with our beliefs, is naturally led to remark on the prominence we give to the cult of the mother of God, the unstinted praise we offer her, the whole-souled devotion we pay her. Were we asked the reason of this piety and religion, we should unhesitatingly reply that it is because we love her; and we love her, who is supremely lovely and lovable, because we know her. How do we know her? By faith, that is, from what we have been taught by the religious Teacher of the Ages concerning her. From the Church we have learned of the signal virtues and privileges which in her led up, as though by degrees, to the crowning glory of her divine maternity. Most conspicuous among these prerogatives is that of her Immaculate Conception.

Our devotion to Mary is therefore founded on our belief; it is the fruit of our faith; it is the love and affection that follows naturally in the wake of intimate knowledge of a worthy object. Piety, devotion, is of the heart; knowledge, belief, faith, pertains to the

mind. He who knows that which is true, good, beautiful, must, unless he be perverse and degenerate, love it; and loving it, he can not keep his affections locked up in his heart, concealed from the eyes of men. That love must come out and show itself. Nay more, the lover will become ingenious, and with infinite pains will devise means of displaying his sentiments. Men are ever indifferent to an utter stranger and can only with difficulty work up immediate sympathy for those whom they know but scantily. But let them come to learn the sterling worth of a fellow creature, his charm of character, his integrity, unselfishness and the other qualities that make one lovable, and they will not only give the best that heart can give, but will sing his praises in season and out of season.

So it is with us in our devotion to Mary. If we love her better and honor her more than the rest of the world, it is because we know her more intimately. From the depths of our souls we pity those who know her not. And we can do nothing better in the order of our honoring her, especially in the mystery of her Immaculate Conception; than to enlighten our faith, to strengthen and deepen our convictions concerning this great mystery.

In order then that the fire of our devotion may burn brightly in honor of the Immaculate Mother, let us feed it well with the fuel of intelligent faith. The first requisite of an intelligent faith is that we understand distinctly what is the object proposed to our faith, what is meant among Catholics by the Immaculate Conception. Much light may be thrown on a subject by first telling what it is not; this clears away many false and erroneous notions that obscure the issue and make understanding hopeless.

First Point.—Now, in the first place, let it be our care to distinguish very clearly between two mysteries which are often confounded and which differ from each other by the distance that separates the Creator from the creature: I mean the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin and the virgin birth of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The one has absolutely nothing to do with the other. That Jesus Christ was, in a manner altogether supernatural, "conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary," is something which every thinking Christian believes, and professes when he recites the Creed. This is the virgin birth. To breathe such a thing as stain in connection with the coming into the world of the Son of God, is a sacrilege that amounts to a categorical denial of His divinity. Mary's part in that mystery was that of a woman chosen to be a vessel con-

taining the Holy of Holies; in this mystery she becomes the mother of God. But between Mary conceiving her Son, and Mary being herself conceived, there is a whole world of difference. It is to this latter fact, the mystery of her being conceived immaculately in the womb of her mother St. Ann, that the Immaculate Conception refers. A whole generation separated these two mysteries in point of time; eternity alone can measure the quality that differentiates them in point of dignity.

Nor is there any question here of a purification of Mary from a stain once contracted; of guilt incurred and even immediately effaced. It is piously believed, without being an article of faith, that two creatures of God, the Prophet Daniel and John the Baptist, were sanctified in the womb of their mothers. Theirs was, therefore, an immaculate birth, but not an immaculate conception, since the first moment of their being found them stained like all children of Adam; from which stain, however, they were, by God's power, afterward cleansed. But no stain ever sullied the soul of Mary; she is "our tainted nature's solitary boast." Unspotted from the first instant of her conception, she came from the hand of God as pure as a child from the baptismal fount. Not at her birth, but before it, at her very conception, at the instant the soul was breathed into her body, was she made immaculate.

Finally, the conception of Mary Immaculate did not exclude all human agency, all natural operation, as did that of her divine Son. Mary's parents were truly parents to her in the obvious meaning of the word. Nor may we pretend that the grace she enjoyed was any more than an exemption, made in view of a future dignity that precluded the very thought of sin, altogether undue, unessential to her nature. It was a pure gift, raising her higher than all other creatures, but leaving her nevertheless a pure creature with an engrafted endowment, "an unfallen child of Adam." Nearer to God than any of us, she is as far from being divine as the least of us. She needed redemption like all of us; but whereas redemption is applied to us by means of Baptism, it was supplied to her by anticipation, at the moment that she began to exist.

We may not as yet see clearly what is meant by the mystery of the Immaculate Conception, but we hold these facts: it refers to Mary's own conception, and not to that of her divine Son; it is a privilege of absolute stainlessness, and not a purification in any sense; it did not change her nature of creature, however similar it may

at first sight appear to the unspeakable privilege of the Saviour's taking on flesh.

The word "Immaculate" means of course "without stain." Adam, it is related in Holy Writ, sinned. A stain followed that sinning, a stain bequeathed to all his descendants. In us, his children, this is original sin. It consists substantially in the deprival of the grace or friendship of God and the consequent forfeiture of the right to heaven. Every child of Adam participates in that guilt and stain and comes into the world a child of wrath. All Christians admit this teaching; and so truly is it a belief of the Christian religion that to deny it is to do away with all necessity for Christ's coming down to earth. His mission consisted in taking up the condemnatory decree made out against the whole race of man, nailing it to the Cross and effacing the sentence with His blood.

Now, Mary, we believe, is the sole exception to the universal law of inherited sin; she alone of all creatures escaped the curse of the fall. By virtue of her future dignity she was exempt from the stain that sullies all flesh and knew not the forfeiture of that right which we all labor under until relieved by the saving grace of Baptism. This is her privilege.

This mystery, then, we believe; not only that, but we love to believe it, love to show our belief in many ways. If the Almighty made her the admirable creature that she is, lavished upon her his choicest gifts and spared her the misery of our accursed inheritance, we can but rejoice and congratulate her on having found grace in the eyes of her Creator. And if God, Who is admirable in all His ways, is honored in His works, scarcely can we honor Him more than by doing homage to this masterpiece of His omnipotence.

Second Point.—Another requisite of an intelligent faith is that we possess good and sufficient reason for the faith that is in us; that we be convinced, intellectually satisfied to receive and assent to the truths we hold. Now, what shall we say, in the first instance, of our faith in this matter; what is the immediate reason of our belief in this mystery?

The peculiarity of our faith is that it comes, as St. Paul says it should come, by hearing; and our hearing is of the Word of God. What Word of God, since conflicting claims are made to its possession? The Word of God properly, authoritatively, infallibly interpreted. And what is this authority, this infallible guide? The Church, sent and commissioned to teach all nations concerning God

and the things that pertain to Him—to which if any man hearken not, he is, on the word of Christ Himself, to be classed among heathens and publicans. A teacher then did God establish; she has spoken, and her voice has been heard, in no uncertain accents, in relation to this mystery. She has proclaimed it as a revealed truth that Mary was conceived free from the guilt of original sin and this immunity is her Immaculate Conception. For Catholic believers this is the immediate reason for belief; it is sufficient; it may even be said to be necessary for any intelligent belief. If a man may reasonably believe—and does so believe—that a teacher can not lead him into error, he is the most unreasonable of creatures if he will not accept her teaching, or even hesitates about receiving it. The infallible mouthpiece of the infallible Church has uttered its definition; on this solid ground, on the unimpeachable authority of that voice, we assent to the truth, and repeat that it is true that Mary was conceived Immaculate. Having then heard this Word of God, feeling secure of the truth which, through its supernatural pronouncement, we possess, we may legitimately go farther and inquire into more remote motives of credibility. In this regard let us remember that, although the Church, when speaking infallibly through her councils or by her pontiffs, bases her claim to unerring veracity on the fact of Christ's promise to be ever with her; yet, because she must employ every human means for ascertaining the truth, the force of her utterances lies, from a human standpoint, in her expressing officially, and giving the weight of her authority to, the belief, teaching and practice—constant and universal—of the Church during the ages. Scripture may but enunciate vaguely a truth, may but outline it faintly, shadow and typify it; yet, if the Christian sense within the Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, seizes upon this bud of revealed doctrine, and in belief and teaching makes it bloom forth and blossom, it is for us as surely a flower of religious truth as if we culled it full blown from the pages of Holy Writ. For the voice of God is in the unwritten, as well as in the written, Word; tradition is as truly for us a channel of revelation as Scripture. And so we shall find a reason for our faith in the mystery of the Immaculate Conception, if we listen to the praises of Mary sung in all the ages of Christianity, if we see her exalted, magnified, glorified above and beyond every other merely human creature. Hearkening then to the symphony of Mary's praises that ring down the centuries: we discover, as the

Church has discovered, that they mean nothing if not that she remained untouched by the universal contagion of Adam's sin; we find this belief obtaining from the first dawn of Christianity, constant, world-wide, approved, encouraged, practised, loved.

To get at the first note of the concert in honor of Mary's unspotted birthright, we must vault over the space of thousands of years and come in memory to the very first days of the creation. It began while Adam yet lay prone under the curse of God, and Eve, his co-worker in evil, shared beside him the weight of divine wrath. Darkly, but not too darkly for the Christian faith to perceive it, Mary's privilege was announced then and there. "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, said God to the serpent, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lay in wait for her heel." A woman then, either in herself or in her seed or offspring, shall co-operate in the undoing of this nefarious scheme of evil, even as Eve had co-operated in the doing. A second Eve shall come. The prophecy was fulfilled of course. Christ redeemed man from the effects of the fall. But one co-operated with Him in a certain sense; a woman gave Him birth. A parallel suggested itself naturally between Mary and Eve. The Fathers called her the new Eve. Here at least is the root of the tradition of which we have spoken. The early Fathers called her the new Eve, not in one place but in every center of religious teaching, with an accord and sameness which nothing but a common source can account for; they repeat it almost monotonously. The succeeding ages took up the strain, knew Mary as such and believed in her. Century answered century in unbroken harmony. Rare denials served but to reveal the general nature and depth of the belief. Time strengthened it. Never was a title more completely won than that of the second Eve to Mary, with all that it implied.

And what does it imply, you ask. Well, it implies that if Mary is another Eve, is similar to her in anything, it must be in her origin, since it could not be in her sin. There is nothing else on which to base a resemblance. And the origin of Eve, was it not immaculate? No sin, no stain here. She came from the hand of God an object pleasing to Him; "she was taken from Adam's side, in a garment, so to say, of grace." She was as yet unfallen and in full possession of her right to heaven. This is the resemblance the Christian sense perceived between Eve and Mary, this the parallel the Fathers draw and dwell upon, with a unanimity and persistence

most remarkable. Mary was the only woman clean, spotless from the beginning; to find her equal in this respect one had to go back to the first woman, Eve; therefore is Mary the second Eve. And this, if it is not for Mary a clear, unequivocal declaration of her Immaculate Conception, then what is it? What other inference is possible!

The burden of Catholic teaching concerning the mother of God, in every age and in every place, clear and bright on the pages of history, is this: Mary is not, in any possible sense, a divine person; nothing may be said of her that is repugnant to reason or contrary to Scripture; with these restrictions, say of her holiness and sanctity what you will, you can never do her full justice. But mention not sin in the same breath with that holy name. Her immaculate purity dates from the first instant of her being; in this she is the new Eve. If the whole Church taught and believed this doctrine from Apostolic times, then the whole Church taught and believed the mystery of the Immaculate Conception. And if the Holy Ghost is ever with the Church, then this doctrine is true. And since it could be known only by revelation, then it is revealed. Being a revealed truth, the Church had only to put upon it the stamp of her approbation and define it officially as an article of faith to make its acceptance binding on the conscience of all the faithful. This she has done. On a memorable day, fifty-two years ago, amid the acclamations of joy of the entire Catholic world, Pius the Ninth, speaking as the Vicar of Christ on earth, after rehearsing this proof of tradition as sufficient ground for believing it a truth, declared the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin a dogma of faith.

And indeed it is difficult to understand how deep Christian sentiment, familiar with the fundamental truths of religion, touched by the grace of the supernatural, endowed with that delicacy of piety that comes from the very well springs of faith, can even for a moment brook the idea of sin in the Mother of God. It reasons after this fashion. The Creator determined to send His divine Son to earth. He chose the path of the flesh, elected to be born of a woman. The channel was universally polluted; yet it was the only natural way. Now, if God could, and why could He not, since He is all-powerful and the law is of His own making; if He would, and why would He not, since sin is the one thing He must necessarily hate in itself: if He could and would make that way clean over which He was to enter into the world then is Mary Immaculate. The law

is universal; but it is the prerogative of every law-giver to be exempt from his own laws; it is the nature of every law to admit exceptions. He could not associate Himself, even remotely, with sin in any form. And what closer association can be imagined than the union of mother and child! How could the Holy of Holies bring Himself to descend into, to take up His abode for many months in the womb of one who had been tainted by sin, an impure vessel, upon whom His own curse had rested, a child of wrath! Let those who pretend to be able to do so, explain it. Catholic piety refuses to entertain the idea, recoils from the very thought of it, as from something repugnant to the instinctive sentiment of faith. The spouse of the Father, the mother of the Son, the temple of the Holy Ghost, Mary was all this; either God had renounced His old-time hatred of sin or she never knew the curse of its baneful touch. Full of grace was she from the beginning, else she had not been found worthy to come into such close, intimate relations with the Godhead.

Conclusion.—This then is, briefly, our faith and the reasons of our faith in the mystery, beautiful beyond measure, of Mary's Immaculate Conception. Let us glorify her for the unspeakable favor which the Almighty was pleased to confer upon her; and see in her entrancing spotlessness an ideal to which we should strive to conform our lives. Let us honor her, and thus secure unto ourselves the grace of her powerful intercession. Let us honor her, and thereby honor Him who made her—the daughter who, among the many that have gathered together riches, surpasses them all.

XVI. CHRIST, THE TRUE MESSIAS.

BY THE REV. BERTRAND L. CONWAY, C.S.P.

SYNOPSIS.—Introduction.—The denial of the rationalistic critics that Jesus claimed to be the Christ. The Jewish concept of the Messias. The Christian concept. The witness of John the Baptist. The temptation. Jesus' manifestation of Himself at first indirect and obscure. Why did Jesus forbid the demons to declare Him Messias? (1) To guard against the popular enthusiasm; (2) to offset the hatred of the Pharisees. He preaches the gospel of the Messianic Kingdom. He insinuates his Messiasship by, (a) His divine authority in teaching; (b) His miracles; (c) His claim to divine prerogatives and powers. His explicit witness to the disciples of John. The testimony of his friends, Andrew, Philip, Nathaniel, and Peter. His Messiasship of suffering and of triumph. The witness of the transfiguration. The Messianic triumph of Palm Sunday. The last testimony before Caiphas.

Peroration.—We should know these testaments so as to present them to orthodox Jews who are still looking for the Messias to come.

It has often been stated, beloved brethren, by the rationalistic critics and broadchurchmen of to-day who deny the divinity of Christ, that never once during His public ministry did our Saviour declare Himself to be the true Messias. Theory after theory has been devised to uphold this contention. Some have denied the historical character of the Messianic utterances of the gospels; others have appealed confidently to the supposed denials of our Saviour; others have insisted on the stupidity of the apostles who failed to understand their Master's message; others have imagined a Messianic legend framed by the first enthusiastic preachers of the resurrection. It is not our purpose, beloved brethren, to discuss these views of the modern unbeliever. But in view of the fact that these theories are being voiced to-day in the popular magazines and newspapers, it is good for us to consider briefly the true witness of the gospels to Jesus, the Messias.

Nothing is clearer in the gospels than the fact that the Jews in the time of Our Lord were ardently longing for the coming of the King of Israel, the Messias. Most of the people had lost sight of Isaias, Man of Sorrows, who was to govern a universal spiritual kingdom. They rather looked forward to a powerful king, who with and under Jehovah would reign supreme over all the kings

and nations of the earth. He was to appear before the people with the evident stamp of God's approval to inaugurate a new, eternal kingdom, "high above the kings of the earth" (Ps. lxxxviii, 28). He was to crush all the enemies of Israel, free them from the galling yoke of the Romans, and make the Jewish people the Lords of all the world. "In him shall all the tribes of the earth be blessed. All the nations shall magnify him" (Ps. lxxi, 17). Every one of Israel's prophets had pointed to Him; every one of Israel's righteous kings had foreshadowed Him; every one of Israel's priests had offered sacrifices for His coming. He was to be their great prophet, priest and king.

The Christian Messias, as witnessed to in the gospels, was in very truth a prophet, priest and king. He came indeed to found a new eternal kingdom, but a spiritual, not a political, one. "My kingdom is not of this world" (Jo. xviii, 36). Even the apostles found this a hard lesson to learn, for even on the very morning of the Ascension they asked the risen Jesus: "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom of Israel" (Acts i, 6).

He was to be a triumphant king indeed, but His triumph was to be gained by the apparent failure of the Cross. He had told His followers frequently that He was the suffering Messias, but the words of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus prove to us how hard this was to believe (Luke xxiv, 21).

There is no doubt whatever that John the Baptist taught the people in the country about the Jordan that Jesus was the Messias. Attracted by John's marvelous preaching, and won by his austere life, they at first thought him the expected Christ. But he instantly denied it, declaring that he was only the forerunner of the Messianic kingdom which was at hand (Luke iii, 1, 15; Matt. iii, 2). He told them plainly that Jesus, the founder of that kingdom, is one "mightier than I, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I have baptized you with water, but He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost" (Mark i, 7, 8; Matt. iii, 12).

These words of the Baptist prepare us for the miracles wrought at the baptism of Jesus, whose Messianic bearing is most evident. In the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus Himself tells us that the Holy Spirit anointed Him at His symbolic baptism, and publicly consecrated Him to the divine office of the Messias. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me. Wherefore he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the contrite of heart"

(Luke iv, 18). Jehovah, His heavenly Father, declared from on high that He was the Messias: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt. iii, 17). St. Matthew makes this very clear to us when he applies to Jesus the words of Isaias, who proclaimed our Saviour well pleasing to His Father because of His Messianic office: "Behold my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved in whom my soul hath been well pleased. I will put my spirit upon him, and he shall show judgment to the Gentiles" (Matt. xii, 18). St. Peter later on declares to the centurion Cornelius the Messianic character of Christ's baptism: "You know . . . Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Ghost, and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed, for God was with him" (Acts x, 38).

From the banks of the Jordan, "Jesus was led by the spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil" (Matt. iv, 1). The threefold temptation of Christ is clearly a revelation of His Messiasship. Satan through the keenness of his intellect, evidently suspects that Jesus is the promised Messias, for he greets him with the title of, "Son of God" (Matt. iv, 3). Satan well knew that the Messias was to possess a great power of working miracles, so he demands of Christ "that these stones be made bread," and "that he cast himself down from the pinnacle of the temple." He further knew that the Messias was to be the king of all the nations, so he proposes to him this universal royalty to see whether or not our Saviour would declare that he already possessed it. (Matt. iv, 3, 6, 9). Jesus rebukes Satan without, however, in the slightest degree, waiving his claim to the title of Messias or Son of God.

From the very outset of His public ministry Jesus proclaimed Himself by word and work to be the true Messias. It is, of course, certain that this manifestation of Himself became clearer and more direct as His ministry neared its close, but there were good reasons for this.

His work in Galilee would have been seriously impeded, if he had allowed the people to regard Him as their Messias, according to the current view of the day. We all remember the popular excitement at the sight of the miracle of the loaves and fishes. The people associated the Messias with the fulfilment of all the national hopes, and crying out: "This is of a truth the prophet, that is come into the world" (Job vi, 14). They at once desired "to take him by force and make him king," in face of the Roman power.

It was to guard against this popular enthusiasm, and not to gainsay in any way His belief in His own Messiaship that our Saviour forbade the open recognition of it by those whom he cured of demon possession. The demons knew Him as "the Christ," "the Holy One of God," "the Son of God," the "Son of the Most High God," come to torment and destroy them" (Luke iv, 41, Matt. viii, 29; Mark i, 24, 25, 34; Mark iii, 12, 5, 7).

Our Saviour acted in the same way with regard to many of the miracles He wrought. When He healed the leper He said to him: "See thou tell no man" (Mark i, 44); and in raising the daughter of Jairus, "he charged them strictly that no man should know it" (Mark v, 43; Cf. Matt. ix, 30; Mark vii, 36; viii, 26). This by no means implied any denial on His part of the miracles He wrought. But He knew full well the evil dispositions of many of His enemies. Had not Corozain, Bethsaida, Capharnaum and even Nazareth refused to hearken to His preaching, and attributed His miracles to Beelzebub?

Where the influence of the Pharisees was practically powerless as at Gerasa in the Decapolis, on the eastern bank of the Lake of Genesareth, He told the man He had cured to tell His friends "the great things the Lord had done for him" (Mark v, 19). So in Samaria, where the same conditions prevailed, our Saviour found no difficulty in proclaiming His Messiasship to the sinful woman of Sichar (John iv, 26).

Instead, therefore, of declaring directly and explicitly that He was the Messias, our Saviour at first preferred to manifest Himself indirectly by His words and miracles, thus gradually destroying in the minds of the people their false view of a political Messias, and preparing His chosen ones for the spiritual Messias, who as Son of God and Son of Man was to die on the Cross for man's salvation.

The "gospel or good news of the kingdom" was the subject of His discourses in the cities and synagogues of Galilee (Matt. iv, 23; ix, 35; Luke viii, 1; ix, 11), and the theme of the beautiful sermon on the mount (Matt. vi, 33), and the parables at the lakeside (Mark iv, 11, 26, 30). As the Lord of the kingdom, he chooses its preachers, and invests them with His own divine authority (Matt. x, 7; Mark iii, 14; Luke x, 9). Unlike the Scribes and Pharisees, He teaches as one having authority (Matt. v, 22, 44; vii, 29), correcting their false human traditions, giving a new authoritative interpretation to the law of Sinai, and so perfecting it that the people.

"were astonished at his doctrine" (Mark i, 22). What made them marvel the more, and made them believe that Jesus was the Messias of their people, was the fact that He was looked upon as a carpenter's son from the despised Nazareth of Galilee, and a teacher who had never studied (Mark vi, 2, 3,; John i, 46; vii, 52; vii, 15).

Again the miracles our Saviour wrought prepared the people for His final explicit revelation of His Messiasship. He commanded the winds and the waves (Mark iv, 35-50), He healed the sick (Mark 1, 31), He drove demons from the possessed (Mark i, 23), He cleansed the lepers (Mark i, 42), He raised the dead (Mark v, 42). No wonder the people cried out: "What is this new doctrine? for with power He commandeth the unclean spirits" (Mark i, 27). "Who is this that both wind and sea obey Him?" (iv, 40). Surely "a great prophet is risen up amongst us" (Luke vii, 16).

Moreover, this humble Jesus, the friend of the lowly and sinners, tells the people continually that He is greater than any of their prophets—greater than Jonas, Solomon, or the Baptist (Matt. xii, 41, 42; xi, 9). He claims the prerogatives of Jehovah. He acts as master of the Sabbath, healing the paralytic and allowing His disciples to pluck the ears of corn on that day (Mark iii, 1-6; ii, 23). And when the Pharisees object, He declares Himself "greater than the temple," and Lord of the Sabbath (Matt. xii, 5-8). He pardons the paralytic his sins, and when His authority is gainsaid by His enemies, He works a miracle to prove it (Mark ii, 1-12). At the house of Simon, He receives back the penitent Magdalene, to the disgust of the strait-laced, hypocritical upholders of the law (Luke vii, 36-50). He gives His disciples the power to work miracles, which they exercise in His name (Mark iii, 15).

But not only did our Saviour insinuate His Messiasship by His authoritative teaching, His miracles, and His claim to divine powers, but He more than once asserted it Himself, or allowed His friends to do so.

When, for instance, the disciples of John asked Him whether He was the Messias (Matt. xi, 3), He answered them by quoting the words which the prophet Isaias had used long before to indicate the Christ (Is. xxxv, 5; lxi, 1). "Go," He said to them, "and relate to John what you have heard and seen. The blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead rise again, the poor have the gospel preached to them" (Matt. xi, 4-5). Again in praising John to the people after the disciples had departed, He praises

him solely on account of his being the precursor of Himself, the true Messias (Matt. xi, 10).

The first words of Andrew to his brother Simon to win him to Our Lord were: "We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ" (Jo. i, 41). And Philip says to his friend Nathaniel: "We have found him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write" (Jo. i, 45). Later on Nathaniel talking to Jesus acknowledges his claim: "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel" (Jo. i, 49).

Still more explicit is the testimony of Peter near the town of Caesarea Philippi. Our Saviour had asked the apostles a direct question: "But whom do you say that I am." Simon Peter answered and said: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. xvi, 16). It was a time most fitting such a clear explicit acknowledgment of Christ's divinity and Messiasship. The ministry in Galilee was drawing to a close; they were about to journey to Jerusalem where Jesus was fully aware that the Cross awaited Him.

This testimony is made all the more striking inasmuch as Jesus declares it proceeds from a divine revelation: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona; because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. xvi, 17).

It moreover is confirmed by the witness of His heavenly Father at the transfiguration. As at the Jordan baptism, a voice came out of the cloud saying: "This is my most beloved Son, hear ye Him." Moses and Elias appeared as representatives of the law and the prophets, giving their homage to Jesus as the founder of the New Covenant, the fulfilment of the Old. The glory of Jesus, "whose garments became shining and exceeding white as snow" (Mark ix, 1-7), gave the three apostles a foretaste of the glory of the triumphant Messias.

During this last year, our Saviour frequently insists on this future triumph. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels" (Matt. xvi, 26). "And when the Son of Man shall come in his majesty, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit upon the seat of his majesty. And all nations shall be gathered before him" (Matt. xxvi, 31-32).

And yet continually He tries to impress upon their minds that He is the Man of Sorrows foretold by Isaias, "who is come to give his life a redemption for many" (Mark x, 45), "who is to suffer and to be rejected by this generation" (Luke xvii, 25).

On His entry into Jerusalem the people made a great public demonstration in acknowledgment of Jesus the Messias, to the great anger of the Pharisees. They cut down boughs from the trees, strewed their garments in the way, and shouted: "Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Blessed be the kingdom of our father David that cometh," "Blessed be the king who cometh in the name of the Lord" (Mark xi, 8-10; Luke xix, 38). Jesus accepted this homage without a word of disapproval. The Pharisees came to Him and demanded that He rebuke His disciples for their Messianic feelings. But instead of doing so, Our Lord said to them: "I say to you, that if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out" (Luke xix, 40).

The last testimony of our Saviour to His Messiasship was made before the high priest, and sealed the sentence of death upon Him. "Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed God," he was asked. And Jesus said to him: "I am, and you shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming with the clouds of heaven" (Mark xiv, 61, 62).

We have thus in brief outline, beloved brethren, sketched the gospel witness to the Messiasship of Jesus the Son of God. It is important for us to know it well, in view of the modern denial of the unbeliever, and the Jew. It may be hard to convince the rationalistic critic, but at the very least we should know the testimony of Jesus and His friends. I have met on my missions to non-Catholics, men and women of orthodox Judaism, who, alert to know the truth have been won by a prayerful study of these texts to accept Jesus as the Son of God, the Messias of their people. Some have faced persecution as bitter as their forefathers faced, when they became the first followers of the risen Christ. Let our prayers go forth for them all, that they kneel down one day with the doubting Thomas, crying out: "My Lord, my God."

XVII. THE PASSION AND DEATH OF OUR LORD.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM GRAHAM.

"Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried." "He loved me and delivered himself for me."—Gal. ii, 20.

SYNOPSIS.—Our Lord, central figure of the four gospels. Story of His Passion their main subject. St. John the Baptist and the "Lamb of God." How this gentle Lamb was done to death for sins of His people forms the drama of the Passion. Only devout believers in His Divinity realize significance of Passion. Cross is mark and ensign of Lamb. From it He reigns, teaches and heals. Brazen serpent of new dispensation. Why title surmounting it written in the three great world-languages of day. Because all true religion, culture, civilization, and empire based on it. Story of Passion usually unfolded in five acts, called sorrowful mysteries.

I. Passion, culmination of suffering life. Way of cross extends from Bethlehem to Calvary. Texts: "Suffered under Tiberius and Pilate. Dying embers of Jewish Sovereignty," (Gen. xlix, 10). Glance at last journey to Jerusalem, Bethany, Olivet, Palm Sunday. Passion proper begins with agony in garden. Type of Eden. Crushing of the olive whence oil of mercy and grace. Depth of mental anguish that wrenched cry for alleviation. The bloody sweat. Vision of sin. In the hands of His enemies. The night of horrors. Judas and Peter. Trial before Sanhedrim. Pilate and Herod.

II. Pilate's weakness and inconsistency. The scourging. Its excess. Vision of the Seers. The "Ecce Homo." Cry for blood and God's answer to it. Our duty to our thorn-crowned King. The carrying of the Cross. The "via dolorosa." Arrival at Calvary. The raising up of the Cross. The winepress and the mill. Cross is throne, pulpit and chair. The cry for pardon of enemies. The words on the Cross and what they suggest. Death on the Cross. Signs. Birth of new order of things. Triumph in death for Jesus and us.

Christ Our Lord is the central figure of the four gospels, as of their summary, the creed. The gospels, with slightly varying details, tell the simple story of His life and the weird and tragic story of His death.

One day his precursor John, seeing the Redeemer's meek and gentle figure among the throng of penitent candidates for Baptism, exclaimed: "Behold the lamb of God, behold Him who taketh away the sins of the world." The death story of this speechless Lamb, "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. vii, 26), forms the historical groundwork of the fourth article of the creed, the theme of my discourse to-day.

It is only the devout believer, verifying in the creed the truth of

Our Lord's real manhood and Godhead, who can grasp the mystery of the passion in all its bearings, and realize the pathos, and poetry, and depth of meaning lying hid in the story that thrills the world. To see in it merely a miscarriage of justice, an isolated act of man's wrong to his fellowman, is to miss its true significance. No doubt it is the story of an innocent man wrongly done to death; of a noble life, witnessing to the value of principle and self-sacrifice and truth by a martyr's end. It is all this, and more. It is the story of the divine in the human—of God "emptying Himself," laying down His human life, not through compulsion, or necessity, or because it was deserved, or needed to chasten and purify as in the case of the saints; but offered up voluntarily, in all its prime beauty and strength, for a race of ungrateful, undeserving, and uninteresting sinners, like ourselves. *"Oblatus est quia ipse voluit."* "No man taketh away my life; but I lay it down of myself." No wonder it is "the story, that moves the world."

The very instrument of his death, sordid and loathsome before, now held in highest honor, has grown into a symbol of belief, hope, light, love, and healing. The Cross now is deemed, and rightly deemed, an altar, a book, and a pulpit. It is the sign of "the lamb that was slain," but "who now lives." From it, in every clime, He reigns, teaches, and heals. It is the symbol of His passion, the rainbow of promise to a fallen race, restored to God. The title it bore when raised on Calvary, some nineteen centuries ago, was written in the three great world-languages of that day, Hebrew, Greek and Latin, indicating, as we see realized in intervening history, that He who was nailed to it was King, i. e., *supreme* in religion, the sphere of the Jew; in culture and intelligence, the reputed sphere of the Greek; and in empire, authority, law, the realm of the Latin, or Roman. Away from the Cross of Christ, the symbol of unselfish love, the world will yet find, to its cost, that there is no religion, no culture, no authority, worthy of the name. "God forbid then, that I should glory save in the cross of Christ Jesus" (Gal. vi, 14).

And now for the story of the Cross, the story of the new Joseph, done to death by his own brethren, and cast into a pit, afterward to rise from it, and be their Lord and Saviour. The drama of the Cross, the story of the passion and death of Christ, is usually put before us in five leading acts, called the five sorrowful mysteries—each stirring the heart to its depths, and helping us on our own

way to Calvary and Olivet—the king's highway, the royal road of the Cross, and the only safe and sure road to the end for which we are destined.

1. The five sorrowful mysteries, summing up the passion, were but the culmination of a suffering life. We may say that the way of the Cross began at Bethlehem, and ended at Calvary. In the portrait drawn of him, by the prophet-evangelist Isaias, "Beautiful upon the mountains were the feet of him that brought good tidings" (lii, 7), yet, owing to his suffering, "was there no beauty in him, nor comeliness, despised was he, and the most abject of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with infirmity." "Surely he hath borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows: and we have thought him as it were a leper, and as one struck by God and afflicted. He was wounded for our iniquities, he was bruised for our sins: the chastisement of our peace is upon him and by his bruises we are healed" (Id. liii, 3, 4, 5). God smote him not for his own, but "for the wickedness of his people."

It was when Tiberius reigned at Rome, and Pontius Pilate governed under him at Jerusalem, just as the last remnants of Juda's sovereignty were fast disappearing (Gen. xlix, 10), that envy of the king reached its full height; and His enemies sought to "deliver him to the Gentiles, to be mocked, and scourged, and crucified" (Matt. xx, 19). Needless to dwell on the momentary triumphs that ushered in His passion, when, as He came down the slopes of Olivet, crowds surged out from Jerusalem, cutting palm branches on the way, to meet and hail the "Son of David," and welcome Him into His royal city. Calvary loomed in the distance. He ever lived under the shadow of the Cross. Even on Thabor "where his face did shine as the sun," yet His speech was not of heaven, but of "the decrease he should suffer at Jerusalem."

The first stage of the passion proper begins with the agony in the garden, the "passion of the soul," as it is well called. Here agony, or grief of soul, chiefly reigned. All pain indeed, strictly speaking, is mental. The mind creates for itself here, and perhaps in the other world too, heaven, or hell. In variety, acuteness, and depth, the mental pains of this passion far exceeded those of the body. In the garden of Eden, Adam indulged in the sweet fruit, that brought bitter woes to our race. Here, in this garden of olives, the new Adam drinks the cup of bitterness to the dregs, to restore man to his lost privileges. In the deep shadows of Gethsemane, the olive is to be

crushed, whence should flow, in rich mystic streams for all time, the oil of grace, and mercy, and truth. The new Isaac receives the first thrust of the sacrificial knife, the emissary goat of the new law "feels the pressure of the high priest, laying upon Him "the iniquities of us all." "My soul is sorrowful even unto death," tell the anguish wherewith His heart was wrung; and the bloody sweat, oozing from His sacred body, speaks in mute eloquence of the agony weighing on His soul.

But Judas and a gang of hirelings are fast drawing near to arrest Him. "Friend, wherefore art thou come?" is the salute, addressed by the searcher of hearts to the false follower that dares to hail Him with a kiss. Repentance was invited, and still possible. But the soul of Judas was scorched, his heart withered and hardened, under Our Lord's embrace. It was the traitor's last grace, and he rejected it. He chose "darkness rather than light"; and the soul that failed to bend to the divine mercy, had soon to yield to the divine justice.

To show that he yields to violence, not by force, but of his own accord, He utters a word, and the rabble behind Judas, "fall backward to the ground." "But this is your hour and the power of darkness," He continues, and submits to their will. The disciples, thereupon, broke and fled; and the meek and gentle Saviour is left to "tread the winepress alone." All through the remainder of that night, Eternal Wisdom, hustled about from one local court to another, is made the sport of the crowd, mocked, buffeted, spat upon, blindfolded, and asked to "prophecy who it was that smote him." Needless to dwell on the trial of Christ before the Sanhedrim, in form and substance clearly unfair, as well indeed expect justice for a lamb arraigned before wolves, as for Christ before his judges. Suffice it to say, He is declared guilty of blasphemy, and brought before Pilate for His death sentence. A charge of treason to Caesar that elicits Christ's own declaration of His inherent royalty—kingship over "a kingdom not of this world," but a realm of light, and love, and peace, and righteousness, to which all men are called. Pilate and Herod, convinced of His guiltlessness, are yet baffled like the worldly wise of all times by His meekness and silence. He is ever irresponsive to dishonest seekers after truth, like Pilate, or after marvels, like Herod. He ever reveals Himself to the penitent; but above all, to the "clean of heart" and "innocent of hand."

2. Pilate, deaf to the voice of his own conscience and the appeal

of his gentle, vision-favored wife, weakly yields to the savage frenzy of the Jews, and hands the Saviour over to be scourged. A ruffianly band, with lewd jest and profane ribaldry, strip off His rent garments and mock robe; and, with cruel rivalry, vie in inflicting stripes on the sacred limbs of the "Son of Man." Instead of the legal thirty-nine, thousands are said to have been dealt, till in the words of Isaias: "From the sole of the foot to the top of the head, there is no soundness, wounds, and bruises, and swelling sores" (Is. liii, 2). Well might He say in the words of the psalmist, "I have been scourged all the day" (Ps. lxxii, 14); and, "The wicked have wrought upon my back" (Id. liii, 2).

Then, over His torn and bleeding limbs they cast in scorn an old torn purple soldier's cloak, and weaving a crown of the long, hard, nail-like thorns growing hard by, they pressed them on His head, till the blood streamed down His face and neck. A reed is thrust into His hand, and bending the knee in cruel mockery, they cry, "Hail, King of the Jews." Thus arrayed, yet wearing withal an aspect of sublime and majestic patience, He is brought before the people in the hope that the sight will melt their hard hearts; but the long swelling cry of "Crucify him, crucify him," is the sole answer to Pilate's words, "Behold the man!"

Weak, wavering, Pilate compromises with his conscience by washing his hands of innocent blood, and then hands Jesus over to the fury of His enemies. But that blood "speaking louder than Abel," seals *his* and *their* doom. Pilate, the worldly Pilate, feared only Caesar, and the people, not from love of Rome but hatred of Christ, cried they would have "no king but Caesar;" but ere that generation had passed, Caesar shed their blood like water, and turned their temple and city into a shamble. Pilate was removed from his post, exiled, and finally took his own life, going, like Judas, to "his place," the place made for himself in the next world by his conduct in this. Christ's enemies are dead and gone; but He "still liveth," and will come again one day "to judge the quick and the dead."

Let us now choose Him for our King. True, His body is torn by the lash, His head is pierced by prickly thorns, His robe is a tattered rag; but our sins of lust, our mad rush for unlawful, material pleasures, have been visited on His head. He is the scapegoat "of our iniquities;" but Our Lord, and our God withal. Let us see the divine in Him, under the veil of our sins, let us salute Him, in

"the diadem wherewith his mother crowned him" (Cant. iii, 11). And every time our eyes light on a picture of the "Ecce Homo," let us remember, that He, the Son of God, "loved us and gave himself for us."

But two more stages of the passion still remain. The two cross beams are hastily clamped together, and the death procession starts for Calvary, giving rise to the fourth sorrowful mystery, the carrying of the Cross. Weary and footsore, repeatedly staggering and falling under its weight, Christ is driven "like an ox to the slaughter." Who has not in going round "the Stations of the Cross," repeatedly dwelt on the incidents and personages of this sad journey, the weeping women, the heroic and surviving mother, the kindly Veronica, the highly privileged Simon of Cyrene. Wending its way along the crooked, rocky streets, crossing the valley of Hinnom and out by the city gates, they reach the mound or hillock of Calvary, so called from the bleached skulls of malefactors strewn around. Tradition makes it the spot where Adam lay buried; but where now "the handwriting of death against us" is to be blotted out. The "bunch of grapes," carried on the staff, is to be bruised in the wine press, the choice wheat is to be ground, to show the fruitfulness of the land in Christ Himself, the rich bread and wine of the Eucharistic table, in the new land of promise.

In the last act of this drama of blood, our Saviour is stripped and His fainting form, torn, bruised, and bleeding, is laid on the Cross, the tree once "accursed" (Deut. xxi, 23), henceforward to be blessed. Rough nails are driven through His hands and feet, deep into the knotty wood, and the new tree of life, bearing the precious fruit of Mary's womb, is raised, dragged hastily along, and thrust, with rude racking jerk, into the hole prepared for it. Every nerve and muscle quivered with the violence of the shock. "They have dug my hands and feet." Nailed to the tree of shame, His back on Jerusalem, His face toward Rome, the new sacred city of God's chosen people, His precious blood streams from the fountains of pierced hands and feet like the river of Eden, to water the new paradise of God. In the moment of His agony, He yet broke the silence that so long held Him mute. In the first of the seven last words, a very storehouse of wisdom and instruction to His devout followers like the seven petitions of the prayer He taught them, He proclaims the great distinctive Christian duty of forgiveness of enemies. He Himself, while being torn alive by them, yet cries out in His anguish,

"Father forgive them for they know not what they do." Thus did He begin His work of high priest, pleading God to spare His people, "ever living to make intercession for us," ever resting on the altar, "the lamb slain as it were," to appease God's wrath against sin and sinners. Every time we are "washed in the blood of the lamb," in the Sacrament of Penance, every time He regards our contrite hearts, and hears our prayer for mercy, we listen, as it were, to the echo of those words from the Cross.

We must pass over in silence the other utterances of Our Lord on the Cross, till His last, "Father into thy hands I commend my spirit"; and then bowing down His head, He gave up the ghost. Thus in the thirty-third year of His age, about 3 p. m. of our day, died "The holy One of Israel," and the work of our redemption was completed. Marvels attesting His divinity followed His death. The earth shook, rocks were rent, the veil of the temple was torn in twain, and from the sixth to the ninth hour darkness covered the earth. As Amos (viii, 9) had foretold: "The sun shall go down at midday, and I will make the earth dark in the day of light."

We have now, brethren, cast a hasty glance at the story of how the "meek and humble lamb of God was slain in the house of those he loved." It was Abel the just, slain by his cruel brother Cain; but in yielding to death He triumphed over it. Death, no doubt, is still the destroyer. As a weird phantom, a hideous specter, it passes over the earth, robbing us of our loved ones, sparing neither age nor sex nor rank. But to believers, to those who hope, who realize that "Christ hath risen," that "death shall no longer have dominion over Him," it is no longer an angel of destruction, but an angel of light, setting the captive free, bidding the lame walk, the blind see, the weary to be at rest. Death now only strikes off the prisoner's fetters, relieves the captive spirit, aids us to commend the spirit to the keeping of Him who gave it. Be it ever therefore our aim in life so to act, as when death comes round, we may calmly "bow the head in obedience to God's call, and give up the ghost, i. e., surrender our bodily life, our hearts and its best fruits to Him Who is the Father of all, and Who made all things for Himself."

XVIII. THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM GRAHAM.

"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above."—Col. iii. 1.

SYNOPSIS.—These two mysteries follow, and mutually depend in order of thought, and time. Ascension completes Resurrection as noon the dawn. Each mystery furnishes a point of our discourse.

I. What is meant by Resurrection? Body necessary to manhood. Soul surviving it incomplete. Body not shell or house of soul, or machine actuated by it, but integral and essential part of human being. (1) Hence Our Lord's Resurrection a restoration. His Rising more than mere "Apotheosis," not figurative as of heroes, and leaders, and authors who live in memory of disciples and admirers. (2) Was a real physical rising of dead body with new powers and qualities, more than Rising of Nature in spring after winter death, or of the beautiful transformation from grub or chrysalis to dragonfly or butterfly. Herein no real death. Lazarus and others raised by power not their own, but still subject to decay and death and laws of matter. In Christ, death lost its dominion and His body its properties. (3) To human reason and experience this fact incredible, but proof that it did take place overwhelming. World's best and holiest thinkers, for past nineteen centuries, have accepted it. There never has been any lull or wavering in Christendom of words in St. Peter's first sermon, "This Jesus did God raise up of whom we are all witnesses," (Acts ii, 24). Easter central and regulating feast of calendar, and Sunday, first day of week, standing evidence of depth of this conviction. Faith impregnable against so-called history and science.

II. Ascension: Completion of Resurrection, crowning visible event of Christ's life. Witness of tradition hereto. Contents of this tradition. This twin mystery a lifting of veil hiding other world. Affords certainty of and glimpse into a life beyond grave. Two main results of Our Lord's ascent: (1) Opening of heaven; (2) "He liveth to make intercession for us."

III. Fruits of thoughts on the double mystery summed up in text, "If ye be risen," etc. (1) Have we risen to newness of life? i. e., undergone the tangible supernatural change from sin to grace? Are we convicted? Have we sincerely washed our stains in blood of Lamb, in penance? (2) Do we seek things above? Are we carnal or worldly, rather than heavenly minded? Let us, therefore, make these mysteries a light to mind, and guide to feet. In realm of thought, convictions, and conduct, let us show that we have risen with Christ, and that sin no longer has dominion over us.

In our discourse on the fourth article of the creed, we dwelt on the various phases of Our Lord's sacred passion, from the agony in the garden, till His lifeless body was laid in the tomb.

The raising up of that sacred body, and its triumphant entry into heaven—in other words, the fifth and sixth articles of the creed, form

the subject of my discourse to-day. These two "glorious mysteries" follow and depend on each other, in the order of thought, just as they succeeded each other as historical facts, in the order of time. We join them together because "Resurrection," in whatever sense you take it, is a mounting up into heaven. A risen body, or mystically, a risen soul, belongs to the kingdom of heaven, though accidentally detained on earth. Ascension day is, therefore, the completion of Easter, as the dazzling sun of noon is the climax of the dawn. Each mystery in turn suggests a point in our discourse.

1. To understand the meaning of the dogma of the "Resurrection" it is well to bear in mind that the body is essential to a man's full personality. The soul, severed from the body, can not be said to be a man. It needs the body to complete its human life. The body is not related to the soul as a casket to the jewel it holds, or as a home to its occupier. The soul may indeed exist apart from the body; but its life is incomplete. The body and soul together make up a complete human being; and are only parted at death by a violent wrench. Resurrection then is the restoration to man of the completeness of identity, lost by death. Our Lord, therefore, in the Resurrection, was restored to the fulness of His manhood. His was not a mere figurative rising, in the faith and love and deep reverence of his followers; as of poets and warriors, and lawgivers, who are said to be "living still" among those who "love and worship them." The Resurrection of Our Lord was no "lifting up, and seating in power and majesty in heaven" by credulous followers, like that of "reckoning certain Roman emperors among the gods." Such as they uttered no Easter message and left no empty tombs. The Resurrection preached and witnessed "even to the shedding of blood," was a real physical, or bodily rising, the issuing forth from the rock-hewn grave, sealed and guarded by the authorities of the city, of one who had been laid in it a mangled and lifeless corpse. This body no doubt, was spiritualized, endowed with new special properties, raised above ordinary laws of matter, and no longer doomed to die over again; yet it was substantially, and radically, the same identical body with that in which he had suffered and died.

The Resurrection was more than the shadowy revival we see taking place in nature, where spring follows winter, and the dead corpse or wreckage of summer life emerges from the dead old grave, in which it lay buried, to the gladness and fresh stirring life of spring. It was more than the birth of a gorgeous butterfly from

grub or chrysalis. In these cases there is change, a new body is grafted in the old roots, but there was no real death. They help the fancy to picture the Resurrection: but no more. In Our Lord's case, there was true death. Nothing more certain, historically and otherwise, than that he really died. His Resurrection was not the creation of a new body, but the reproduction of the previously living one dissolved, or, as we say, corrupted (i. e., broken) by death. "Thou hast brought me to life, and hast brought me back again from the depths of the earth" (Ps. lxx, 20). "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; nor wilt thou give thy holy one to see corruption" (Ps. xv, 10). His was not the mere reanimating of a dead body as in the case of Lazarus and others, still remaining corruptible, and destined to return to the grave. Death's dominion in their case remained intact: in His, "Death shall no longer have dominion over him" (Rom. vi, 9).

That a human being duly certified as "dead and buried," should leave the "grave, in which they laid him" and walk abroad in open day, eat, drink and converse with his former friends, is a hard saying that seems to overtax belief, inasmuch as it runs counter to all human experience. Yet it is this fact on which the stately fabric of our holy religion is based. "If Christ be not risen from the dead, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (I Cor. xv, 14). And none more certain. The four gospels, apart even from their inspired character, coming down as historical documents, alike simply and sincerely allege the main facts of the Resurrection—the death and burial of Our Lord, the empty tomb, the various appearances of the risen Christ. The discrepancies of statement in matters of detail only show absence of collusion and afford a guarantee of trustworthiness. A cloud of witnesses to the same fact never tell exactly the same story. At Pentecost the apostles and others, among them, no doubt, many or most of the "500 brethren who had seen the Lord at once in his risen body," began to preach the Resurrection; and that preaching has gone on till the present hour, and ever will go on. In the words of St. Peter's first sermon: "This Jesus did God raise up, whereof we are all witnesses" (Acts iv, 2). To the apostles, and infant Church generally, who knew the Lord and who could not, even if they would, have been misled or deluded, as will appear to any attentive and impartial reader of the gospels and early Church documents, the proofs were overwhelming that He had risen and left an empty tomb. They are as cogent and cumu-

lative now as then. Indeed time and experience do but verify the fact that "the Lord hath truly risen and appeared unto Simon."

Never has the Church wavered in witnessing to this basic and essential truth.

The great feast of Easter that regulates our calendars and almanacs, the observance of the Sunday as the Sabbath, instead of Saturday, a very far-reaching change, now kept all over the cultured world, serve to show how deeply rooted and general was and is the belief that Our Lord emerged a living and conquering Christ from the grave wherein they laid Him. Indeed, belief in a risen and ascended Christ is not so much an inference needing proof, as a truth that we feel and see when stated. With Christ's own imperishable church, built on the rock of truth, we know it and see it, by a power of vision, a deep keen insight of faith, strong and irresistibly convincing, impervious, in fact, to all the specious arguments against it, drawn from history or science. In the inmost recesses of the heart we hear Our Lord say "Fear not, I am alive and was dead; and behold, I am living forever and ever, and have the keys of death and of hell" (Apoc. i, 18). Through the same great luminous spiritual force called faith we *feel* rather than *reason* to the truth of His Ascension when "Ascending on high he led captivity captive" (Ps. lxvii).

2. The sixth article of the creed, "He ascended into Heaven," is the logical and historical issue of the Resurrection. In this mystery we dwell on the crowning event of Our Lord's visible career on earth, and the completion of the divine scheme of man's redemption. The memory of this event, told in the gospels of St. Mark and St. Luke, as well as in the Acts of the Apostles, has remained ever impressed in the mind of the Church; and is attested by a special feast kept to honor it, on the fifth day of the week, Thursday, forty days after Easter. Tradition points to Olivet as the scene of the Ascension, and even boldly ventures on the details that accompanied it—the gathering of the apostles and disciples in the cenacle, the sudden appearance of Our Lord in their midst, His discourse of the occasion, His leading the holy band, the infant Church, over the scenes of His passion, and up the slopes of Olivet, to the spot still shown, whence "He was raised up and a cloud received him out of their sight" (Acts i, 9).

Attended by troops of angels and the redeemed prisoners of limbo and purgatory, "he entered into the holies, having obtained eternal

redemption" (Heb. ix, 12). Well might holy David sing: "Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates: and the King of glory shall enter in" (Ps. xxiii, 7). "Who is this King of glory? Christ Jesus that died, yea that is risen also again, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. viii, 3, 4).

Now this return of Our Lord to bodily life, followed by His triumphant entry into heaven, lifts the veil that screens the other world, and affords us an inkling of some of the mysteries, that are one day "to be revealed in us": It brings home to us the existence in concrete form of another world, besides the present. In the dark hours of the passion, the world accepted death as the end of all, the great destroyer, to which all had to yield; as indeed in its unbelieving section it still does: but lo! the Resurrection and Ascension of One, "having the keys of death and of hell" opens the eyes of all not only to a shadowy possibility, but an actual certainty of life beyond the grave. It is for the race a birth into a new world, a leap from the natural and moral, into the supernatural and spiritual. To the believer a new order of facts, a new aspect of life, opens out in the thought that Christ has risen from the dead and mounted into heaven "the first fruits of them that sleep"; and next that He "sitteth at the right hand of God making intercession for us" (Rom. viii, 19).

Two main results of vast importance to each and all are involved herein, first that Christ opened the gates of heaven to us: "I go to prepare a place for you" (John xiv, 2), and next, that He is in heaven our perpetual mediator and advocate. "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Just" (I John ii, 1). "He is the propitiation of our sins" (Id. v, 2).

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth will draw all to myself" (John xii, 32). He "was lifted up" on the Cross of Calvary, and the hearts of all are drawn to Him, the divine victim of the sins of men; He was lifted up in the Resurrection, and our hearts are drawn to Him in the fullness and gladness of Easter joy as we sing with the Church, "This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps. cxviii, 24). Finally, He "was lifted up" in His ascension and our hearts follow and are drawn to Him in the throne He occupies, at the right hand of His Father, in the heaven He opened for us, and wherein He "is always living to make intercession for us." Calvary draws the heart upward in repentant love, the empty tomb in trustful joy, and triumphant Olivet

in rapturous longing "to be dissolved and to be with Christ," for surely "where the head is, there also should the members be."

I have not dwelt on what Our Lord insisted on so strongly, the expedience of His visible departure from earth to heaven. Enough to say, that the Ascension completes the great circle of redeeming grace, and revealed truths, needed to bring us erring sinners back to God. The sense of unpardoned sin leads to need of atonement. This atonement is utterly insufficient without a divine victim. The divinity of the victim involves a distinction of persons in the essential unity of the Godhead, and as the leprosy of sin, the great canker of evil, is ever leavening the corrupt mass of humanity, so is the work of mediation on the part of the ascended Christ ever necessary, ever "living to make intercession for us."

3. As the fruits of our thoughts on the twin mystery of the Resurrection and the Ascension we may glean a twofold lesson suggested in the words of St. Paul: "If ye be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above" (Coll. iii, 1). We, too, must rise from the dead and ascend, or perish. The risen and ascended Christ is the sun and center of the world of spirits. If He is not such to us, if we move not in due orbit round Him, then we are in danger of getting lost, and shattered in awful night. (*a*) We must first of all, be "risen with Christ." The Resurrection must not be to us a mere past historical event, or a detached unfruitful doctrine. Dogmatic truth and moral truth may be dealt with separately in books, but in a soul, "risen with Christ," they blend and interpenetrate. To me and you the Resurrection, subjectively, is a seed of spiritual energy, as well as a sure fact of history. It is only in and through our risen and ascended Saviour, that we can rise from the moral grave of sin, and both seek and find "the things that are above." For a dead body to rise from the tomb and a sinner to emerge from moral death are both effects of divine energy. Rising from sin is as tangible a supernatural fact as rising from the grave. Have we then undergone this vital moral change, this spiritual resurrection, this transfer from the state of sin to the state of grace, this passing upward from the deep, dark, cold grave of evil, to the warmth and sunshine and air of God's friendship? We rose from the dead in Holy Baptism; but alas how often have we not lapsed back into the grave of sin. Take then to heart this first lesson of the Resurrection and "be risen" with Christ. We rise again through penance and humble confession of sin. (*b*) Next, let us take a lesson from the As-

cension, and ever "seek the things that are above." "Mind the things that are above, not the things that are upon the earth" (Coll. iii, 2). "Christ rising again from the dead dieth now no more; death shall have no more dominion over him" (Rom. vi, 9). The Ascension, as I said, is the completion of the Resurrection, so, too, the soul that rises from sin, that emerges from the unregenerate natural state to the supernatural, *ascends, rises* to a new sphere, a new plane of being. It is more than a mere elevation of thought, or feeling, it is a passing from death to life, and abiding therein. Grace, the principle of this inner change of life, is the seed of glory. A soul in grace, is really a soul that has "ascended with Christ"; hence the word "heavenly-minded," so aptly applied to souls thus risen, and ascended with Christ. "But God (who is rich in mercy) for his exceeding charity wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sin, hath quickened us together in Christ . . . and hath raised us up together, and hath made us sit together in the heavenly places through Christ Jesus" (Eph. ii, 4, 5, 6). In conclusion, therefore, while we make the great doctrines of the Resurrection and Ascension "a light to the mind," let us not fail also to make them "a guide to the heart." Let moral death, i. e., sin, never "have dominion over us," let us ever in the way of life be "risen with Christ," and in the realms of thought, of conversation, and of conduct, "seek the things that are above."

XIX. THE JUDGMENT (SECOND COMING OF OUR LORD).

BY THE REV. WILLIAM GRAHAM.

"From thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead."—Seventh Article of Creed.

SYNOPSIS.—Introduction.—Christ stands to all as Redeemer, Advocate, Judge, in which latter capacity we regard Him in the seventh article of the Creed. His attributes as Redeemer and Advocate are shrouded or merged in those of the stern, all-knowing Judge. Importance of subject both for time and eternity. Propose to draw attention to (I) What is meant by judgment after death, and why needful. (II) Why general judgment necessary in addition to particular.

I. What involved in idea of judgment. All to be submitted to it. God, our supreme Judge, transfers His powers to Christ as man. By a sort of process of selection all "go to their place," as sheep or goats, just or unjust. The sifting or refining known as judgment ever going slowly on. We are growing up chaff or wheat, good grain or weeds. We are now sowing and what we sow we shall reap. Process slow here and now; but in death, and at last day, instantaneous. St. Paul and Felix (Acts cxxiv). Judgment imbedded in all creeds. Ever strikes home, because revealed in every act of conscience. "Hall of double truth." God's searchlight. God avenger of all law, physical and moral. Judgment shadows law. Man now a sower. God in judgment, reaper and thresher.

II. This judgment twofold—particular and general. General registers decrees of first, but necessary to complete it. 1. Because man not a solitary unit, but member of a body. Total results of a life known only at last day. 2. Sin or service of self, and virtue or service of God, a joint product of body and soul. Hence both must be judged at reunion on last day. 3. Necessary to justify God's ways to the individual soul and the race. 4. Needful also to vindicate Christ and His saints to assembled mankind.

Conclusion.—Let this solemn truth penetrate mind, heart, and conscience. Sow now in holiness if you would reap safely in judgment. Exhort to watch over thoughts, words, and deeds of life.

To each and every member of the human race, Our Lord stands in the triple relation of Redeemer, Advocate, and Judge. As our Redeemer, He suffered and died on the Cross for us, as our Advocate He ascended into Heaven, to plead for us, and "From thence He shall come" a second time to be our Judge. The truth thus embodied in the seventh article of the Creed, is of unspeakable importance to us all, singly, and as a whole. He who came down from heaven, to

redeem and save us, Mary's Son, who prayed, and wept, and hungered, and died a cruel death on the Cross for us, will come down again, visibly, in dread pomp, and power, and majesty, to be our Judge. The ensigns of the Redeemer, the accents of the pleader, will be laid aside, or merged in the stern unbending features of the Judge. The attributes of mercy and love will be veiled, and that of justice alone will appear. "Behold he cometh with the clouds" (Apoc. i, 7). "And lo, one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven" (Dan. vii, 13). "Behold the Lord cometh with thousands of his saints to execute judgment upon all" (Jude i, 14).

So important, indeed, does the Church deem reflection on the great fact of the last judgment, that, to call men's attention to it she begins and ends the liturgical year, by reading for the gospel of the day the portion of Holy Writ wherein are described the signs that precede, and attend, the second coming of the Son of God, in judgment. Now this is not a vague shadowy far-off event, that concerns only the world at large; but an intensely personal one, since the doom of the whole does but register the fate of each. What we say of the general judgment applies to the judgment that awaits each singly. A few words, therefore, (1) on what is meant by the solemn judgment awaiting souls and why justice demands it, and (2) why, in addition to the particular judgment awaiting each soul, there should be a general judgment awaiting all.

I. The doctrine involved in the article of the Creed now under consideration, is that a solemn, searching, sifting judgment awaits all responsible beings, when this planet of ours has run its appointed course; and the world in its present form, ceases to exist. At a day, and at an hour, unknown even to the angels, Christ, in His human nature, "to whom all power has been given in heaven and on earth," and "to whom the Father hath given all judgment" (John v, 22), will come from heaven, to judge the quick and the dead; and pronounce the sentence consigning the just to everlasting joy, and the wicked to never ending woe. Every human being from Adam down to the last born representative of our race, will be present and drop into one or other of the above classes—called the sheep and the goats—the just and the unjust.

How the great catastrophe known as the *last day,* so luridly painted by spiritual writers, and issuing in the second coming of Our Lord, is to be brought about, whether by the result of physical causes now at work, or external agency, is not our purpose to

determine. We are concerned only with the moral aspect of what will take place at the end of the world, when the judicial power of God over men will be handed to Christ. As a matter of sober fact, we may say that Christ is always coming to judge us. The recording angel is ever at work in the soul. Judgment, in the case both of men and nations, is but a reaping what they have sown. It is the final act of a process still going on. We ourselves are daily sowing and thus recording the materials of our doom. Judgment, in Greek, means division or sifting. Both at the end of life and at the last day, there will be a division, a sifting of the evidence, as in the parable of the wedding garment, and the parting of the goats from the sheep. Here good and evil are intermingled; then there will be a quick, sharp separation, a cleaving asunder of mankind, by the force of moral attraction, under the eye of the great Judge, when they shall go, each "to his own place." We are now free to make our choice. It will be too late, when the great white throne is set, and the books are opened, and the fateful words are uttered: "Give an account of thy stewardship, for now thou canst be steward no longer."

We read in the 24th chapter of the Acts that, when St. Paul "treated of justice and chastity, and of the *judgment to come,*" Felix, the governor, trembled and "was terrified." It was no mere opinion, no new truth that he preached, but one that struck the guilty conscience of the listener, a truth imbedded in all the creeds of the race, and merely put luminously by Jewish and Christian thinkers that: "In the end of a man is the disclosing of his works" (Eccl. xi, 29), "and that all things that are done God will bring to light" (Eccl. 12); that there is an eye that sees all, an ear that hears all, a memory that stores all, a "searcher of hearts" in short, from whom nothing is hid, even the heart's own most hidden windings. The shadows that death casts over the gayest and sunniest lives are but those projected by the judgment following death. What easier than to die! It is but a leap back into the void, whence we came. It is not, however, the mere act of dying, it is the burdened conscience, that makes death the "King of terrors." The mysterious land of the Pharaos has yielded to research nothing more impressive than "the weighing of the heart in the hall of double truth," a painting that shows the judgment, awaiting souls after death, with startling realism. Executed fourteen centuries before Christ, it still speaks of "the judgment to come." Then as now, a

glance at the moral state of the world proved to men the need of an "assizes" of souls to make the scales even. Saints are tortured for "obeying God rather than men," while hoary sensualists, who in life disregard all law, human and divine, are "clad in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day." Even in the light of reason and conscience, men saw then, as now, the need of a balancing of accounts in the next world, to rectify the glaring inequalities of this. Nero wears the purple while Peter and Paul die the death of criminals. A breach of the laws of nature involves punishment, i. e., judgment; so is it in the moral order. In nature, we reap what we sow, even though the reaping and sowing be separated by a long interval of time. Law is universal. Man is free. He is a moral agent who may obey or disobey, follow or discard the will of God, expressed in law, and made known by conscience. But he is morally bound to choose only what is right. Woe to him if he abuses the divine gift of liberty, in turning a deaf ear to conscience, speaking in the name of God. In the Scripture God says: "I shall search Jerusalem with lamps." This is judgment, God's searchlight turned upon the soul. Night may seem long. Deeds of darkness seem easily to escape the light. But the sun will surely rise and the whole world stand revealed in its light. So will men and nations stand revealed when the Sun of Justice will appear in power and majesty, to judge mankind. As soon extinguish the sun as to hide any foul thought, word, deed, or omission from the all-seeing eye of God.

God is the author of all law and the avenger of its infringement, whether in the physical or moral order. Every revelation of the divine Will in conscience is shadowed by judgment. At present the process of judgment is slow—but real. The Holy Ghost is ever "convincing the world of sin, of justice, and of judgment." At the last day, as observed, the end of life for the individual and of the world for the race, the process will be sudden. The sifting will be instantaneous. Here God seems only to look on. Now the sower is at work; then, it will be the turn of the reaper and the thresher. All is but a getting ready for the mills of God, which "grind slow, but grind sure."

II. This ingathering or harvesting of souls, as I observed, is twofold; at the end of life for each individual, called the particular, and at the end of the world for the whole race, called the general judgment. It is with this latter phase of judgment—the second coming

of Our Lord—that the seventh article of the Creed is specially concerned.

And now it may be asked, why this general judgment, seeing that as soon as the breath leaves the body the soul is confronted with its Judge and hears its fate sealed forever? True, but we must bear in mind that we are not solitary individuals, but members of the great human family, with corresponding duties and responsibilities. None stand alone in this world. Their good or evil deeds in endless ways affect the lives of others. There are lives pregnant with blessings to generations yet unborn, and others, equally fertile in curses and wrongs. A man lives in his works, an author in his books, a statesman or conqueror in the measures for which he is responsible. How can these results be totalled up till the last day?

Neither must we forget that we sinned, or served God in our bodies; and it is only fair that we should be rewarded or punished at the reunion of soul and body, to take place at the general rising on the last day. Again, the honor due to God—recognition of His infinite justice, wisdom, providence, and love—due to Him by all creatures, loudly calls for this general judgment. His moral government, as we see it in the blurred page of individual experiences, would be indefensible, were it not for the judgment to come. Anarchy would be justifiable without it. The union of pleasure with vice, sorrow with virtue, the prosperity of the wicked and misery of the just, have often nearly driven generous souls into skepticism or despair. "My feet had almost swerved, my steps had well-nigh slipt," says holy David, "seeing the prosperity of sinners" (Ps. lxxii, 2, 3), and almost in despair he adds: "Then have I in vain justified (i. e. *purified*) my heart, and washed my hands among the innocent." "Behold these are sinners; and yet abounding in the world they have obtained riches" (Ib. v, 12, 13). Hence God is often blasphemed, blamed or ignored in His own world, by His own creatures; and therefore has He reserved to Himself a day of final retribution when His justice, goodness, and wise government will be made known to the whole world.

Furthermore, a setting right of the world's wrongs is due in justice to Christ and His saints, and this can only be done when the world's harvest is gathered in. The world weighs their merits in a false balance. The standard of Christ, the standard of the beatitudes, that would heal the world, is reversed. It often calls good evil, and evil good. Clean lives, pure lives, holy lives, are often

scorned and laughed at. More respect is paid to the idol of pleasures than to the Christ-God. Mammon holds a higher place in hearts of worldlings than does Christ. But in the general rising, and weighing of lives to follow, all this will be reversed, and justice dealt out impartially to all. God's elect will then hear from the lips of the eternal Judge the praise due to them. The envious sinners will be forced to exclaim: "We sinners thought their lives madness, and their end without honor; behold now they are the children of God and their lot is among the saints" (Wisdom v, 4, 5).

Let me exhort you in conclusion to let the great truth of the seventh article of the Creed penetrate mind and heart. The words of the Creed, if not acted on and lived up to, are but empty sounds, the mere husks of thought. And what truth more telling and practical than that involved in the "judgment to come"?

It tells us that we shall stand one and all in presence of assembled mankind to hear our fate for eternity. We are beings answerable to God for our conduct, one day to be called upon to give an account of our stewardship. Let us sow *now* the harvest we should fain reap then. Let our thoughts be such that no blush of shame would rise to the cheek if displayed to the gaze of the whole world. Let our conversation be such that no honest ear would be stopped rather than listen to it; and our deeds such as to call forth the approbation of the Supreme Judge of heaven. May it be one day said to us: "Well done, good and faithful servant, because thou hast been faithful in few things, behold I place thee over many. Enter thou into the joy of the Lord."

XX. THE FRUITS OF THE SACRED PASSION.

BY THE REV. WILLIAM GRAHAM.

"And the Lord was pleased to bruise him in infirmity; if he shall lay down his life for sin, he shall see a long-lived seed, and the will of the Lord shall be prosperous in his hand."—Isaias liii, 11.

SYNOPSIS.—Introduction.—In every department of life fruits of passion and death of Christ visible. They would heal all the evils of society, moral and material, were it not for perversity of free will. Withal they heal the nations even unconsciously. Our object not material, but spiritual fruits of passion. May be ranged under three headings. Summed up in word Redeemer. (I) Freedom from sin, font of all evil. (II) Opening of heaven shut by sin. (III) Foundation of church, wherein Christ exercises functions of King, Priest, and Prophet; to carry out delivery of men from effects of sin, and the secure application of fruits of passion.

I. Freedom from sin highest liberty; subjection to it greatest bondage. All human woes result of it. No creature could atone for it. Infinite merit necessary. How delivered. By blood (i. e., by fruits of passion) of lamb, "that taketh away the sins of the world."

II. As a consequence of sin, heaven closed. Lepers cut off from life of city and social intercourse. So leprosy of sin shut out men from "city of God" and "Company of Saints." Our Redeemer through merit of His passion and death cleansed our sins and gained for us admittance. He is the gate. "He openeth and no man shutteth."

III. Main fruit of His passion foundation of "His kingdom" to free men from slavery of sin, and impart fruits of His passion till end of time. He is described as "purchasing and sanctifying His Church by His blood." Texts. For this end He abides with her as King, Priest, and Prophet, ruling, healing, and enlightening each and every member. All may thus reap the fruits of His sacred passion and death.

Conclusion.—Receive not gifts of God in vain. He, your Redeemer, offers all "plentiful" redemption.

In the chapter from which this text is drawn, Isaias describes with almost the minuteness of an eye-witness the death and passion of Our Lord, and at the same time glows with His subsequent triumph. In the world's march onward and upward, morally, materially, and intellectually, the influence of "the travail of his soul," i. e., the fruits of His passion and death, has admittedly been the most powerful factor. Explain it as we may, Christ's person, His work, His life, His sufferings and death, form the great spiritual driving force of the world to-day, telling even on races and nations to whom His name is yet barely known. Were it not for man's perverse will, His message would remedy all ills, and realize the dreams of the most advanced reformers. At His death there were no hospitals for the

sick, no help or pity for the poor; workingmen were all slaves, women were held of no account, children ruthlessly sacrificed. To-day progress is the watchword of His followers. Where Roman statesmanship, Greek philosophy and genius, Jewish religion, failed in uplifting and healing the nations, Christ succeeded.

But our purpose is not with the material results of Our Lord's life, passion, and death. They are only the indirect or reflex fruits thereof. His mission was mainly to the soul, and in its healing the body shared. Each nation, it is true, has its roll-call of great men, warriors, statesmen, legislators, to whom they owe an undying debt of gratitude for noble lives spent in their service. But the peculiarity about Our Lord is, that He was a liberator and benefactor, not to one section of the race, but to all; and that He benefited the whole world more by His passion and death than even by His life. The fruits of His sufferings reach every human being, great and small, whether they know Him or not. They still flow in unremitting streams from the great fountains that store the Precious Blood. "And Christ died for all: that they also who live, may not now live to themselves, but to Him Who died for them" (II Cor. v, 15). "With Him is plentiful redemption." "He hath redeemed Israel from all her iniquities." He has thus earned for Himself the title of the World's Redeemer. This title sums up in one word "the fruits of Our Lord's passion and death"—the subject of our discourse to-day. In this capacity He redeemed us (1) from sin; (2) He opened the gates of heaven, and lastly (3) He founded a great indestructible organization, the Church, to transmit these fruits of His passion and death to men's souls till the end of time; and wherein He ever abides, as King, Priest, and Prophet.

I. He is called Redeemer because "by his precious blood he hath redeemed the world," thereby endowing us with "the freedom wherewith Christ has made us free" (Gal. iv, 31). Freedom from what? St. John furnishes the answer: "He washed us from our sins in his own blood" (Apoc. i, 5). To win for us freedom from "sin and its consequences" was therefore the first-fruits of His passion and death. The worst form of bondage is sin, the highest form of freedom is that of conscience relieved of its weight of sin. All human suffering is in the main but the effect and shadow of guilt, or at least of some social or physical legacy originating in it. Sin is the poisoned root of all evil,—the source of all slavery. Remove it, and the world would become a paradise. But it ever has

pressed with irremovable force on the guilty conscience. Its shadow is ever falling on our world. No creature could remove it, neither angel nor saint, however eminent, for the stamp of infinite merit is necessary to blot out the infinite curse, "the handwriting of death" against us. "No brother can redeem nor shall man redeem" (Ps. xlvii, 8).

In the fall, man was dethroned and his nature tainted. "By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death," and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned (Rom. v, 12). Who, then, will free man from the accumulated evils of original and actual sin? Who can reinstate him in his lost privileges, or wash his sin-soiled nature clean? Those who ignore the saving doctrines of redemption and grace have no remedy, can not even suggest a remedy for what is admittedly the root of all human ills. There is only one who is "powerful to save," Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. "If by one man's offense death reigned through one, much more they . . . shall reign in life through one Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offense of one unto all men to condemnation, so also by the justice of one unto all men to justification of life" (Rom. v, 17, 18). He is "the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world." How did He, and how does He, take away sin? By His voluntary death and passion. From the fountain of pardon and strength opened on Calvary flow the cleansing streams that wash the leper "whiter than snow." The true measure of sin is the unfathomed pain of the passion and death of Christ. From the nature of the remedy we learn the virulence of the disease. With our eyes fixed on a crucifix, we divine the malignity of sin and the depth of love of our Redeemer, who let Himself be "led as an ox to the slaughter" for our sakes.

II. Again, not only did our Redeemer by His passion and death blot out our sins, and "nail them to the tree," He thereby also opened the gates of paradise, shut against us. The fruit of atonement involves also the fruit of eternal life. His death was our life. True, man's spirit never dies. It is by nature immortal. But life apart from God, cut off from union with Him, is, in a disembodied spirit, prolonged spiritual death. Union with God is life, severance death. The soul diseased, and isolated from its supreme good, is like a leper cut off from his fellow men and banished from the city. The leper's life is but a living death. Nay, on account of actual sin, the soul is liable to positive pains and penalties as well.

Heaven, therefore, in the sense of union with God, and an abode of unspeakable delight, was shut against us. No human being, however just, entered heaven till Christ, through the merits of His passion and death, opened its sealed doors. Patriarchs, and prophets, and priests, saints of old and new law, form part of the triumphant procession that follows Him "who leads captivity captive." "He openeth and no man shutteth." As the fruits of His sacred passion, the portals of paradise are open to every child of Adam. There is not a single human being, howsoever far he may have wandered from God, that can be prevented from returning to "his Father's house." Let him only repent of his sins, let him prove himself a "man of good will," a true Israelite, a "child of Abraham," and the gates of heaven are flung open at his approach. Our Redeemer Himself is the gate. He is ever open to receive us. It is on our side that the door is closed, and He who was "crucified, dead and buried," even stands "at our door and knocks." "I am the door. By me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved: and he shall go in, and go out, and shall find pastures" (John x, 9).

In thus saving us from sin and opening the gates of heaven, our Redeemer also delivered us from Satan and hell, usually numbered among the fruits of His sacred passion. In freeing from sin He freed also from Satan and hell, the creatures of sin, its consequences and results. In sinning we enlist under Satan and open ourselves the gates of hell.

III. But the main fruit of the passion was the establishment of His church, where the children of the kingdom share the "plenty of their Father's house," and the "hungry are never sent empty away." He purchased and sanctified her by the price of His precious blood. "Christ loved the church and delivered himself up for it, that he might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life." "That he might present it to himself a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish" (Eph. v, 27, 28).

For the regular and permanent distribution among men of the fruits of His sacred passion, He has founded a spiritual generation "who have his words," and who shall not pass away "till all shall be fulfilled." This family of God, this holy assembly, or church, dowered with certain graces, powers, and divine life or spirit, at Pentecost, is indestructible; because He meant the fruits of His sacred passion to be ever within reach. They hang from every tree in this "enclosed garden" of the great King. Baptism will ever

continue to regenerate, to infuse the divine life purchased for us on Calvary. Penance will ever cleanse, and restore, and pardon sin, and open heaven. Holy Eucharist will ever feed the hungry crowds in the desert of life with the body "that was delivered for us," and the "blood that was shed for us;" Holy Orders will ever renew the depleted ranks of the ministry; and Extreme Unction ever fortify the soul in its journey to eternity. These are all fruits of His sacred passion, and He still lives in His church, to distribute them. It is there we find the Redeemer, sitting on His throne, and "ruling in the house of David, his father." He is no shadowy, historical figure of the past. "He is Christ, living to make intercession for us," not a Christ of the books. The scope of research, say some, is to bring Jesus from the clouds, to get away from the Christ of the creeds to the living Christ of the gospels. But we claim ever to have had the living Christ in our midst, as King, Priest, and Prophet, ere a word of the gospels was penned. In this threefold capacity He ever was, and ever is, bestowing upon us the fruits of His sacred passion and death.

He is King, His Kingship is no empty name. "For this was he born and did he come into the world." His kingdom, though "not of this world," i. e., not meant exclusively to promote worldly ends and purposes, is yet in the world, true, real, visible, so that all may know and enter it, if they choose. His aim as its King is to impart to His subjects the gifts, graces, and other benefits that are the fruit of His passion and death. By His cruel death and sufferings, and His supreme infinite act of abasement and self-sacrifice, He won a right to the title for claiming which He was wrongly put to death. "Behold, I have given Him for a witness to the people, for a leader and a master to the gentiles" (Is. lv, 4). "For he that made thee shall rule over thee, the Lord of hosts is his name: and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, shall be called the God of all the earth" (Ibid. liv, 5).

The very shadow of His kingship in the Church has ever healed and uplifted the nations. Every step forward on the path of genuine progress is traceable, directly or indirectly, to the presence of "his kingdom on earth," based on self-sacrifice, reared on the Cross.

That men may reap the fruits of His sacred passion, we must ever pray for the triumphant advance of His church, that in the spiritual desert, called the world, His church may be "ever enlarging the place of her tent, stretching out the skins of her tabernacles, lengthening her cords, and strengthening her stakes" (Isaias liv, 2).

Furthermore that He, our Redeemer, may the more effectually convey the gifts of redemption, the fruits of His passion, to the individual soul, He is also Priest. In the order of grace, by sacraments, and sacrifice, and prayer, He is ever, as Priest, fitting and adorning our souls to enable them to join one day the church triumphant. The very name Christ means "*anointed.*" "Jesus . . . is made a high priest forever, according to the order of Melchisedech." The great work of ruling, guiding, and sanctifying His kingdom at large goes on likewise in each soul. His priestly offices make it a temple of God, wherein He makes it His delight to dwell. The ministry of the Church is but an extension of the priesthood of Christ. Holy Mass is said, and all sacramental rites conveying to the soul the fruits of the passion are administered in His name.

Lastly, our Redeemer conveys the fruits of His sacred passion in His capacity of Prophet. Prophets of old were anointed to denote their function of voicing God to His people. In like manner Christ speaks through His unerring Church the words of divine truth; and from "Peter's bark" ever addresses the multitudes lingering on the shores of time. The fruits of the passion are not only balm to the heart, but light to the mind. The Cross is not only a sign of "the way," but a chair "of truth." It is light to the eye as well as a guide to the feet. In the knotty problems bearing on faith and morals, the Church, in this dark world of ours, is as a ring of light, a beacon on a hilltop. And why? Because Christ exercises His prophetical office within her, and is He not "the world's true light," "the light shining in darkness," though "the darkness does not comprehend it"?

Conclusion.—In conclusion, dear brethren, let me exhort you "not to receive the gifts of God in vain," i. e., not to put any hindrance to the work of our Redeemer in your souls. His desire is "to be with the children of men," to fill them with the fruits of His sacred passion. This is "plentiful redemption," to have our sins cleansed, the doors of heaven thrown open to us, to enter "His kingdom" and see the "Lamb that was slain" reigning among His elect as King, Priest, and Prophet. Let us taste the fruits of His sacred passion, and "see how sweet" it is to have our Redeemer reigning in our hearts as King, sacrificing all that is displeasing to Him therein, and offering them, as Priest, "a pure oblation to his Father"; and finally, as Prophet, "teaching us the way of God in truth," for "he that followeth me," says Our Lord, "walketh not in darkness."

XXI. THE THIRD PERSON: TRUE GOD.

BY THE REV. THOMAS J. GERRARD.

"And I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you forever."—John xiv, 16.

SYNOPSIS.—Introduction.—Our sanctification appropriated to the Holy Spirit. This sanctification works along the lines of nature. If, therefore, we are to co-operate intelligently and sympathetically, we must know as much as possible of the nature of the Holy Spirit and His operations. Our theme therefore is: that the Holy Ghost is true God; that He proceeds as the interwoven love of the Father and the Son; that He has a temporal mission which is the sanctification of men.

Exposition.—I. The Holy Ghost is God. The truth of personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit involved in the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. Our information, therefore, must be sought in revelation. From conscience we can reason back to a God of love; but the procession and mission of the Third Person can only be known from the word of God. (a) Scripture represents the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son as distinct from creatures, yet distinct from the Father and the Son. If Father and Son are God, therefore Holy Ghost is God. Holy Spirit assumes form of a dove. Numbered with Father and Son under one name. St. Paul speaks of Christ and Holy Spirit as both being God. (b) Scripture ascribes actions to the Holy Spirit which could be ascribed only to God. Creation. Inspiration. Cause of Incarnation. Life-giver to the Church. Reader of the secrets of God.

II. The Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father and the Son as from one principle. The truth not a mere theological contention, but a revelation with practical consequences. Shows us perfect love. Scripture speaks of the Spirit of Jesus as the Spirit of God. The Son is often represented as sending the Holy Spirit. Christ symbolized the procession from the Son by His breathing on the apostles. The Father and Son have all things in common except the relations of Fatherhood and Sonship; therefore they breathe forth the Holy Spirit as by one principle. Spiritual value of this truth.

III. The Holy Ghost has a temporal and earthly mission. God willed to have an external glory. To this end sent the Holy Spirit who is (a) Amor, (b) the Donum Dei, (c) Digitus Paternae dexterae, (d) Consolator.

Conclusion.—The dogma makes us realize the truth of God living within us. Man has a twofold dignity—body, temple of the Holy Ghost; soul, spouse of the Holy Ghost. This gives the whole meaning to life. Without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, life is nothing. With the indwelling of the Holy Spirit it is everything.

The direct work of our sanctification is attributed to the Holy Ghost. It is really the work of all three Persons of the Blessed Trinity. But just as creation is appropriated to the Father, and redemption to the Son, so sanctification is appropriated to the Holy

Ghost. This work of sanctification, however, is not one of magic, not something which takes place without our knowledge and co-operation. No! the Holy Spirit works along the lines of nature. He takes the faculties of man as they are and spiritualizes them, and uses them as instruments in the working out of His designs. If, therefore, we are to act in harmony with the working of the Holy Spirit, it must not be by passively and blindly relinquishing ourselves to His influence, but by actively and intelligently entering into sympathy with His work. And in order to do this it will be needful to possess as much knowledge as we can of the nature of the Holy Spirit and His operations. If we are to co-operate in full sympathy with Him it must be from an intelligent conviction that He is true God, and consequently our true Sanctifier. This, then, will be our theme in the following consideration: that the Holy Ghost is true God; that He comes as the united love of the Father and the Son; that His mission on earth is to make men holy; that in a word He is the fulfilment of Christ's promise: "And I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you forever."

In the course of history the human spirit has wandered off in various ways from the catholic truth concerning the nature of the Holy Spirit. There is, however, one error which characterizes our own times and which, in a way, includes those of times past. It regards the Holy Spirit merely as a certain power and operation of God. It denies that He is a real person separate from the Father and the Son. It claims that He is the work of God, but not God Himself. Now since the doctrine of the nature of the Holy Spirit has its roots in the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, the deepest and most inscrutable of mysteries, it is evident that we can not seek for our information concerning it in reason. Our source must be in the revealed word of God. We all have a conscience, and we can each of us feel with St. Paul two powers within us, one urging us to good and the other to evil. Knowing our weakness we can reason that the good power within us comes from another and is not of us. We might even argue that that other was the Supreme God. But we could never arrive at the truth which declares a personal Spirit, who is God, who comes from the bosom of God, who comes as the sign of mutual love between Father and Son, comes to dwell in the souls of men forever. For that we must go to God's revealed word.

It must be noticed then, first of all, that, in quite a large number

of Scriptural references, the Holy Spirit is numbered either with the Father or with the Son, or with both, as constituting with them a society quite distinct from creatures. At the same time, however, the Third Person is always counted as distinct from the First or Second. By being numbered with the Father and the Son He is revealed as God. By being counted as distinct from the Father and the Son He is revealed as a separate Person. Thus, at the baptism of Jesus, the Holy Spirit is represented as coming from God the Father, yet so distinct from Him as to assume the bodily shape of a dove. Again, Our Lord Himself implies the distinct divine personality in His words when sending forth His disciples to teach all nations. "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Here Our Lord makes the revelation of the Blessed Trinity, the foundation both of the Church's doctrine and external religion. He gives a rite by which all people may be received into the Church. They are to be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Spirit is placed equal with, yet distinct from, the Father and the Son. He is made with them the object of supreme worship. The baptism is, as the Fathers were so very fond of saying, not in the *names* of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but in the one name, herein signifying one God, the indivisible and perfect Trinity. Further, St. Paul, writing to the Romans, begs their prayers in the name of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit: "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, through Our Lord Jesus Christ, and by the charity of the Holy Ghost, that you help me in your prayers for me to God." In his letter to the Corinthians he identifies the interests of Christ with those of the Holy Spirit. "Wherefore I give you to understand that no man speaking by the spirit of God, saith Anathema to Jesus. And no man can say the Lord Jesus, but by the Holy Ghost." Again, in the conclusion to his second epistle: "The grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the charity of God, and the communication of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen." The words of St. Peter to Ananias tell explicitly of the divinity of the Holy Spirit. "Ananias, why hath Satan tempted thy heart, that thou shouldst lie to the Holy Ghost, and by fraud keep part of the price of the land? . . . Thou hast not lied to men but to God."

Our classical proof of the divinity of the Holy Spirit is from St. John's account of Our Lord's discourse at the last supper. Christ here speaks as man: "I will ask the Father and he shall give you

another Paraclete." As God, He Himself would send the Paraclete. The Paraclete is one who is called; that is, an advocate. Christ is also an advocate, and so He says: "I will send you another advocate, one who will plead my cause in your hearts, the spirit of truth, one who will bear witness of me." He will not leave us orphans, but will come again, first, bodily in the Resurrection; then, spiritually, by the Paraclete, who will abide with us forever.

Next we may see how the sacred writers ascribed divine actions to the Holy Spirit. He is claimed to have the power of creation. God could not delegate such a power to a creature. The production of something out of nothing is an infinite act and only a being of infinite power could do it. This act is ascribed to the Holy Spirit: "Thou shalt send forth thy Spirit and they shall be created and thou shalt renew the face of the earth." He is claimed to have the power of inspiration. The essential meaning of inspiration is that the writing so inspired has God for its author. St. Peter in his second epistle ascribes the authorship to the Holy Spirit. Here the contrast is between the action of the Holy Spirit and the will of man: "For prophecy came not by the will of man at any time, but the holy men of God spoke, inspired by the Holy Ghost." The message of the angel Gabriel told of the Holy Spirit as the cause of the Incarnation. That the divine and human natures should be united in one person was a work only of divinity. Thus, then, did our lady receive the news of the word made flesh: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore, the holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." The Church was to be the continuation of the Incarnation. So, just as the Holy Spirit was the cause of the Incarnation, so also is He the cause of its continuation. St. Paul tells us that the Holy Ghost appointed bishops to rule the Church of God, and again that they were placed there by God. Our Lord's promise after the last supper contains the same truth: "The Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind whatsoever I shall have said to you."

A powerful argument for the divinity of Christ was His power of reading hearts. This power is also a prerogative of the Holy Spirit. And more, not only can the Holy Spirit see through the hearts of men, but also, because He is God, He can see through the infinite knowledge of God's mind: "For the Spirit searcheth all things, yea,

the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, but the spirit of a man that is in him? So the things also that are of God no man knoweth, but the Spirit of God." Here, then, are a few of the inspired and revealed records of the divinity of the Holy Spirit. It is a great mystery. The human mind could not have reached it without revelation. But once the revelation has been made, the human heart accepts it as one of the primary theological truths for which it has been prepared. Throughout the history of the Christian people its worship of the Holy Ghost as God has always been equal to its worship of the Father and the Son as God. "Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost."

The point of doctrine next in importance after the divinity of the Holy Spirit is what is known as the double procession of the Holy Spirit. This truth asserts that the Holy Spirit comes both from the Father and the Son. It is a denial of the heresy of the Orthodox Church, which claims that the Holy Ghost proceeds from the Father alone. This distinction between the truth and the error is not, as some have supposed, a mere quarrel over formulas. It is not merely a question as to whether we shall have an extra word in our Creed. But it is a truth, the denial of which robs the Christian revelation of one of its most superb beauties. Of course the chief reason why we accept the truth is because Christ has revealed it; and we should accept it as such regardless of consequences. On closer examination, however, we find that the truth is fraught with practical issues of the most momentous kind. Christ is not only the truth, but He is also the way and the life. The procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son is a truth revealed to us to show us the way and the life. It gives us the type of perfect love. It shows us the origin of the Spirit of love, who abides with us forever. No wonder then that the Church, which has retained this truth, has been so fruitful in those experts in love, the saints of the Catholic Church; and no wonder that the Church which has rejected it has been so sterile in them.

The coming of the Holy Spirit from the Son is seen from numerous passages which speak of the Spirit of Christ, or of the Spirit of Jesus, just as other passages speak of the Spirit of the Father, or the Spirit of God. Thus St. Paul to the Galatians writes: "And because you are sons, God hath sent the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Again to the Philippians he says:

"For I know that this shall fall out to me unto salvation through your prayers, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." Then in the Acts of the Apostles we read of St. Paul and his companions. "And when they had passed through Phrygia, and the country of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia. And when they were come into Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not." Again the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Son is implied in all those places which speak of the Son sending the Spirit. "If I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you, but if I go I will send him to you." Indeed it has been the teaching of many of the Fathers of the Church that Christ meant to signify this when He breathed on His disciples and said to them: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost."

Further, the coming of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son is not as it were the result of two causes. It is the result of the Father and the Son acting together in one operation. Christ said: "All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine. Therefore I said that he (the Holy Spirit) shall receive of mine and show it to you." With the exception of fatherhood and sonship, the Father and Son have all things in common. Both Father and Son in one combined breath breathe forth the Holy Ghost.

Now we are in a position to see the practical value of our theology. The Holy Spirit comes to us as the personified love of the Father and Son. The eternal Father, seeing the vast ocean of His own infinite beauty, by understanding it produces the image of it, His eternal Son. The Father and the Son, looking at each other's incomparable beauty, love each other with an infinite love. This mutual love becomes interwoven and forms a third divine personality, the Spirit of love. Here, then, we have the perfect type of love. It is by the Holy Spirit coming as the united love of the Father and the Son that God loves Himself, and has loved Himself throughout eternity. Not without the Holy Spirit, proceeding in the way in which Catholic truth says He proceeds, could God give to Himself His intrinsic eternal glory.

God, however, chose by that same Holy Spirit to create for Himself an external love and glory. He would make a human heart and mind so that through them He could receive a creation's praise. In this aspect the Holy Spirit is called the gift of God: "the charity of God is poured forth in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us." Every act of love therefore which we make is but God's

Spirit coming to us and returning through us to Himself. He is thus the source of all those gifts which draw us nearer to God. The rite by which we are raised to the position of heirs of the kingdom of heaven is the washing with water, the Sacrament which symbolizes and causes the action of the Holy Spirit in our souls. "Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water, and of the Holy Ghost, he can not enter into the kingdom of God." If we have fallen away from baptismal innocence, and wish to be restored again to God's favor, it must be by the power of the Holy Spirit acting through priestly ministry. "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain they are retained." Indeed, whether our graces come through the Sacraments or outside the Sacraments, whether they be the graces of faith, wisdom, knowledge, healing, tongues, prophecy, "in all these things one and the same Spirit worketh, dividing to every one according as He will."

We do not know the laws by which He acts. The Spirit breatheth where He will. Only this law we know—that He is ever with us with sufficient light and strength for all our needs. He is called the finger of God's right hand. Therefore it is that He is always leading us gently and sweetly even though we be unconscious of His influence. We may seem at times to be making our own spiritual careers and saving our souls by methods which we judge best and safest. But as we grow older we begin to realize that it is another who guides us. We had thought we were choosing Him when in reality He was choosing us. It is not necessary to have lived very long in order to look back on the past and recognize the control of the Holy Spirit. Strangely enough we see this when it is all over, and either can not, or will not, see it when it is taking place. We are like the disciples who walked with Our Lord to Emmaus. They did not realize on the way to whom they were talking. But when, at supper, He made Himself known, then they remembered how their hearts had burned within them.

The action of the Holy Spirit within us, strengthening us in all our spiritual efforts, gives Him the title of Comforter. In this office He uses a special Sacrament, the laying on of hands. By the strength received in Confirmation we are fortified against dangers to our faith, and through our faith against dangers to our moral life. In the constant, daily, hourly struggle it is the Holy Spirit who is our mainstay.

Thou of Comforters the best,
Be our soul's most welcome guest,
Sweet refreshment here below.

This, then, is the practical fruit to be gathered from the dogma of the Holy Spirit. We know that a divine person, who is the love of God and the gift of God, has come to us as our Guide and Comforter, to dwell within us and by His indwelling to make us holy, to foster and bring to perfection our everlasting life. In the olden times God revealed Himself as the God of Might, a God whom His people served with a service of fear. In the Gospel times He revealed Himself as a God of Love, a God enjoying the happiness of His threefold personality, a God clothed in human flesh, and living among His created children. A further revelation, however, showed Him to be a God living not merely among us, but within us. By the mission of His Holy Spirit He enters into every pore and fiber of our being, so that, if we do not positively hinder His coming, He will mingle His life with ours so as to live in us and we in Him. "If any man will love me he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him, and make our abode with him."

By this indwelling of the Holy Spirit man receives a new twofold dignity. His body becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit. "Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" His soul becomes the spouse of God. And here it is that man finds the meaning of his life. The human soul and the Holy Spirit are as the bride and the spouse of the Canticle. "Who is this that cometh up from the desert leaning on her beloved?" Leaning on Him she is all. Turning from Him, she is no one. Hence St. Paul says: "If I have not love I am nothing." God is love. And if that love be absent: if the Holy Spirit mingle not His life with mine: if I do not act by His action, and live by His life, then is my life meaningless and all my aims and efforts and aspirations are but as an empty dream and a tale that is told.

XXII. THE CHURCH.

BY THE REV. FRANCIS M. HARVEY.

"I believe in the Holy Catholic Church."

SYNOPSIS.—The various names given the Church in Holy Scripture. The notion underlying each. Meaning of the term in its broad sense. In this sense it belongs to all ages; is not limited to external organization, yet is the divine plan for the salvation of souls. Hence the necessity of membership. Church is a visible society, visible in her founder, in her members, etc. Christ laid the foundations: (a) In His private life by inculcating the virtues poverty, humility, obedience, etc.; in His public life by forming and instructing His Apostles. The character of the men chosen adapted to the work to be done; to the lessons to be taught; to the souls to be drawn. Life given to the Church by the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Church a live organism; Christ lives in it and gives it its life blood. Gratitude due to God. Practical gratitude by love and obedience.

God's Church is spoken of in the Sacred Scriptures under many figures. It is presented as a city whose foundations "are in the Holy Mountains;" a vine with its branches; a government; a temple, a bride, and again, a body, whose head is Christ.

This last figure—the favorite of St. Paul—is by far the most expressive. When the Church is spoken of as a bride, the love, singleness of purpose, community of interest, and ceaseless devotion that exist between Christ and His Church are typified. When we hear it called a city, or a form of government, we are reminded of the general unity of interest and aims that should be found among the members of the Church. The figure of the temple and its cornerstone bring out the necessary cohesion that must exist in the Church; but the image wherein Christ is represented as the Head and the Church as the Body, comprises all these and adds something more. It suggests the unity and independence of one part with another, and gives, too, the idea of life, life springing from one central principle and diffusing itself through all the members; the idea of a sensitive participation of joy and sorrow in the various parts of the living organism; the idea of growth and adaptability to different times and conditions; the idea too of a living soul.

Such are some of the Scriptural answers to the question, "What is the Church?" The theologians, following the teachings of the

apostles and of the fathers, tell us that that great assemblage under the Headship of Christ are all who are bound to the Saviour by the ties of faith and of love. This defines the Church in what is called the widest sense, and embraces in its meaning all the just, whether this present life holds them in the flesh, or the shadows of purgatory enfold them, or the white light of heaven has received them. Indeed, according to St. Augustine, the angels are within the fellowship of the Church, since they are united to Christ as their Head, by supreme and most intimate love.

From this it necessarily follows that the Catholic Church reaches back to the earliest dawn of history. As St. Gregory the Great says, "The Church embraces all the just, from Abel to the last righteous man who shall live upon earth."

The Church has been likened to a heaven-descended river, issuing from beneath the throne of God, and flowing triumphantly down the ages till it loses itself in the bosom of eternity; covering the earth with the knowledge and love of God as the waters cover the sea.

Nor in the ages before Christ did the Church want an organization and a history. To the ears of Abraham, the Syrian shepherd, came the voice of God bidding him, "Get thee out of thy country," and obediently he went forth, the first missionary of God's Church under the written law, and became the founder of a divine society. All the world's religious truth was gathered into Judaism, the sum increasing and growing more definite, from Abraham on the Plains of Mambre, to the last prophet who gave his inspired message to a listening world; and all this truth and more is the treasure of the Catholic Church to-day. St. Paul, his poet's heart throbbing under the logician's armor, exultingly sings the glory of Christ's Church, and reminds the Jews that their fathers did drink of Christ in the wilderness; and the Eternal Word Himself shows us His teaching running through the warp and woof of human life. He bids us understand, that, as the Word, He has not only made the world, but inspired its religious teaching from the beginning, and that in His earthly mission He is binding His truths together and adding to them; establishing the law of grace upon the written law of Moses, which in turn rests upon the law of nature. The Saviour tells us unmistakably that His whole thought is for His Church—He would reconsecrate it, and with superb additions, make it the wonder of the world; from the scattered fragments build up a New Jerusalem. He seems to murmur to His Church in the words of the Prophet

Isaias, "O poor little one, tossed with tempest without all comfort, behold I will lay thy stones in order, and will lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy bulwarks of jasper; and thy gates of graven stones, and all thy borders of desirable stones. All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children."

As we have seen, the Church in this broad sense, or as we say, the Soul of the Church, has existed from the beginning. The Soul of the Church is nothing other than the union of the heart and will with God. Unlike the human soul, it is not limited to the external organization. It may exist in the midst of the heresy and schism innocently professed, and bind to the Redeemer hearts that have no visible union with the body of the Church. Still we must remember that the Church of Christ, the Catholic Church, is "the divinely appointed organization for saving the souls of men," and that invincible ignorance and good faith form the precarious hope of those that are outside that society founded by Christ.

The Church, in the strict and ordinarily accepted sense, is a visible society of men professing the same faith and governed by legitimately appointed pastors under the Roman Pontiff. The end for which this society was instituted is the eternal salvation of its members.

Many have denied that Christ's Church is a real society, a society of men banded together for a distinct object, the salvation of their souls. It has been and is claimed that the Church consists of those who believe in Christ, and that no *visible* organization is necessary.

Now an invisible Church on earth is a contradiction in terms. As well speak of an invisible kingdom in our midst with ruler and subjects invisible, following laws that are inscribed on invisible tablets and holding inaudible converse one with the other. Abstractions are very good and very useful in the mental world, in metaphysics and even in science, but we dismiss them summarily in the practical affairs of every-day life and what so practical, so removed from mere abstractions, as religion, which is to influence each word and act, and influence them for eternity? Christ manifesting Himself to the world did not communicate Himself as an idea, or an emotion, or an inspiration to the minds and hearts of men, as He might have done; in fact as He did manifest Himself to the prophets of old. He could have been a spiritual influence dominating irresistibly a certain number of human beings, and through them guide

the entire race. But He took to Himself a material body; spoke a language that men could understand; made Himself in every way a man, and employed ordinary methods of teaching and directing, ways that could be understood by all, simple and learned alike. Throughout His earthly life He insisted that His mission was to found a Church. He spoke of it in ways that His fellowmen could understand; called it a city, a kingdom, a vine. Is it probable that in establishing what He came to establish He would have given His followers to understand that He was to found a kingdom with explicit laws and ordinances, while He meant all along to be a mere influence, felt in widely differing ways by different people? That He would have no visible fellowship such as the world would know and recognize as such? Had He made Himself a visible bridegroom that He might espouse an invisible bride? Christ is not only God, a pure spirit "dwelling in light inaccessible," He is also man with a humanity as real as that of any other child of Adam, and His Church must be a divine and human institution capable of being known and recognized by men as He Himself was known. "All power is given to me in heaven and earth." We must not forget that His power must still be exercised on earth and exercised in a way to be understood of men, that is, by laws and ordinances, and through representatives.

The establishment of His Church engaged the mind of our Saviour during His whole life upon earth. The thirty years of His hidden life were years fruitful of divine teaching for His Church. Then it was that He laid broad and deep those foundations of spirituality on which the superstructure of Christianity must be erected. Humility, obedience, poverty, meekness, gentleness, and charity, all of which the world regarded as badges of ignominy little short of criminal, He during those thirty years demonstrated to be virtues. In the most practical, the most vivid way, He taught mankind their value. He lived them in His daily life, knowing that every phase of that life would be the subject of reverent study, and its lessons the guide of unborn ages. The years of His public ministry He devoted to the teaching body of the Church and to the unfolding of certain fundamental doctrines of faith. In His death He gave the central dogma of His Church, the Redemption. In the Resurrection He proved the divinity of His mission, His right to found a Church, and thus put the seal of His divinity upon the moral and dogmatic teaching that He had given. In the interval be-

tween His Resurrection and Ascension, He gave definite organization to His Church. And since it is the artist's final touches that seem to give distinctive life and character to his work, so these last quick, sure touches of the Master are looked upon as the creative touches that brought the Church into being. We are apt to forget the long years of waiting and of effort that He passed in Nazareth and Galilee slowly fashioning His life work, laying the foundation of that moral and dogmatic teaching which is to outlast time itself.

In establishing the teaching body of His Church, selecting the apostles, Our Lord's manner of acting may be summed up in the words of St. Paul: "The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men." The establishment of God's Church illustrates more clearly perhaps than aught else God's mysterious workings, whereby He chooses the base things of this world to confound the mighty, and the things that are not, to bring to naught the things that are.

In selecting His messengers, Our Lord did not turn to the learned or powerful, but went among the poor and illiterate of Judea. He collected about Him a number of disciples, men in no way distinguished. These He instructed carefully, and when the time was come to make choice of the twelve, who were to share His priestly office and be the channels of spiritual life to His Church, "He went into a mountain to pray, and He spent the whole night in communion with God. And when day was come He called unto Him His disciples, and He chose twelve of them whom He called apostles."

The wise of this world, if they intended to set on foot some great movement to establish some world influencing society, would patiently and carefully select men renowned for intellect, for training, for wealth and for influence. Would we not consider them mad if they went to the water-front of one of our seaport towns and chose, from among the fishermen and the dock-laborers, the founders of an epoch-making organization? If some great philosopher should appoint as the doctors of his system—men whose duty it would be to change the world's intellectual thought—twelve comparatively unlettered men, timid and awkward by character and by training, would we not consider him as obsessed by folly? And unquestionably such would be the case, for in the things of the world the world's weapons and approved instruments should be used. In founding His Church, however, the Saviour looked to the spiritual fitness of His messengers in the great spiritual revolution which He contem-

plated, intellectual acumen, culture, and personal influence were not the things desired. He looked for men whose souls were a fitting soil from which the grace of the Holy Spirit might bring forth the fruit of eternal truth and life; men in whom the virtues which He wished to place at the foundation of His edifice—humility, poverty, self-sacrifice and simplicity—had already an abiding place. Though the world was very wise with its own wisdom and very cultured, it was yet a world steeped in ignorance regarding the things of the spirit. Systems of philosophy it knew, and literary perfection it had long ago attained, but of the knowledge of the true God and His claims upon the human heart it had not learned even the elements. God always selects fitting instruments, and in selecting His apostles He weighed the requirements of means to end. A spiritual work needed spiritual men, men unwarped by false philosophies, untainted by corrupting pleasures, and such men were to be found only in the lower walks of life.

Again, a world-conquest by poor and ignorant fishermen would be a miracle that would astound the minds of all thinking people. They would be obliged to recognize that some great force was behind it all, and since the work was the spiritual reformation of humanity this force must of necessity, they would say, be divine.

Another reason for our Saviour's selection we find in the fact that His is the Church of the poor. One of the signs of His Messianic mission was His preaching of the Gospel to the poor, His care of the despised and neglected children of His Father, and no argument could appeal more powerfully to them than the great fact that the leaders in Christ's Church were of themselves.

The Saviour's message, too, of itself went straight to the heart of humanity. It required no scientific training, no keen natural ability. It addressed itself not to this nationality nor to that, not to one class rather than to another, but as man to man. Coming in these very earthen vessels, it met man just as he was, stripped of ornaments and advantages, and it spoke to his heart, spoke to his conscience, "spoke from God to the God-like within him," spoke as a man speaking to his brother. Christ's choice of His apostles was also in perfect harmony with His message and His life. His own life and especially His death on the Cross were to destroy utterly all distinctions of race, of station, and of class. The Captain to whom the world was summoned to give allegiance, the King who bade all men become His subjects, was a poor artisan of a poor village of a despised nation.

So the folly of God evident in the life and in the death of the Saviour, and most evident in His manner of establishing the Church, was wiser than men, and the things that were not—poverty, humility and self-denial—brought to naught the pride and pomp and pleasure of this world, the only things that were heretofore of supreme importance.

With all His preparation, notwithstanding the foundations laid in the long years of obscurity, the lessons taught during His public life, the prayerful choice of His apostles and their training, the end was not yet.

Carefully and tenderly had He fashioned the fair body of His Church from the clay of humanity, tempered it with His blood, baptized it with His tears, it was still but a body, fair but lifeless, beautiful but barren. It must abide nine days in the darkness of retirement, in the quickening solitude of prayer, until on the morning of Pentecost the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete, breathes into it, and the bride of Christ "that cometh forth as the morning, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army in battle array," stands revealed.

We have been considering the Church as an organized society, divinely appointed, and such it is; but we must not let these theological and historical considerations hide the fact that it is a living organism. In thinking of the Church we must not picture it as some vast power which imposes duties upon us and speaks down to us. The Saviour should not be regarded as having introduced His Church to the world and then allowing it to work its own way. It is an error to think only of what Christ's coming was to the ancient world. The pouring of that fresh and living stream into the arid wastes of human history, when the garden which God had made beautiful by His planting was turning into a parched desert of heathenism, did not cease with Our Lord's departure from the earth, nor with the death of the apostles. In the Church is the living Christ; in the Church is all the power of the Holy Spirit; in the Church is all the tenderness of the heavenly Father, and this Triune source of life is with us now in all the affairs of our workaday world. From it flows spiritual life into the very heart of humanity and human society; life into our governments, life into our commerce, life into the training of families, life into every individual soul; and consequently God and His Divine Son are as much in our daily lives as in the lives of the early Christians, the Saviour is as-

closely united to every man, woman, and child in His Church as He was to John who laid his head upon the Master's bosom, or to Mary, who bathed His feet in her tears. Christ then is something more than the mere Founder of His Church. He pours His own life into it, for it is His body. He did not stay apart and lay its corner-stone and rear its structure outside of Himself. He rather put it forth from His own Sacred Heart; and giving it the indwelling Spirit, the Paraclete, took up His constant abode on earth in the life of those who love Him and obey His commandments.

His coming was the beginning of the divine life upon earth as St. John says, "The bread of God is He who cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world." How intimate is that union between the active member of Christ's Church and the Head! "I am the vine, ye are the branches;" "I in you and you in me."

This, then, is what the Church should mean to us; a living union with Christ, feeling His precious blood flowing through our souls from His Sacraments; our hearts and minds throbbing in unison with the heart and the mind of the Eternal Word.

We should indeed be grateful to Christ, not only for His life and death, but likewise for the gift of His Church. Our gratitude should be practical and show itself by reverent obedience to the commands of that Church with whom Christ dwells all the days of her life even to the consummation of the world. We may then look forward to that day when we will pass from the ranks of the Church militant to those of the Church triumphant to reign with Christ Our head forevermore. Amen.

XXIII. THE INCOMPLETENESS OF REVELATION.

BY THE RT. REV. JAMES BELLORD, D.D.

"Christ crucified; unto the Jews indeed a stumbling block, and unto the Gentiles foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God, and the wisdom of God."—I. Cor. vii, 23, 24.

SYNOPSIS.—The seeming hopelessness of Our Lord's cause when He was dead on the Cross. His enemies had triumphed, His friends had deserted Him. This scene followed by that of His resurrection and sojourn of forty days, finally His ascension. The change caused by the Resurrection in the apostles, in the world. The position of this doctrine in the economy of the faith. The use God might have made of this miracle for the confusion of His enemies, Herod, Pilate, the Jews. The use God did make of it—to draw his own around Him. This truth like all others revealed sufficiently yet obscurely. What prevented the Jew from seeing the light of revelation? Their passions. Complaints of many as to the difficulties and insufficiencies of proof of the dogma of religion due to same cause, viz., passion. All are given sufficient light. Men to-day follow examples of Jewish leaders in rejecting Our Lord. Revelation made to a finite mind must be incomplete. Yet enough given for light, guidance, and salvation; not enough to satisfy curiosity or to compel assent. Great privilege of those to whom this mystery is revealed.

I. No cause ever seemed more hopeless than that of Our Lord Jesus Christ when He hung on the Cross, silent in death, surrounded by the thick darkness. One class of the Messianic prophecies, and these the most striking ones, seemed to have no application to Him. Was it of this crushed, degraded being, executed as a criminal amid the execration of all, that the Psalmist wrote these words: "Thou art beautiful above the sons of men, grace is poured forth on thy lips. . . . Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O thou most mighty. . . . Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever. He shall rule from sea to sea . . . until the ends of the earth. . . . All the kings of the earth shall adore him, all nations shall serve him" (Ps. xliv, 17)? Any stranger who saw that last terrible scene, knowing nothing of the divine life and virtues of Jesus, might have well supposed that He was only one more of the many false Messias who sprang up in those days, created a little excitement, gained a few low-class followers, and suddenly collapsed. The miraculous events that attended the crucifixion proved to some souls that a great prophet was dead, but, even so, His course was run, all was over.

He had left no enthusiastic party behind Him, nought remained but empty remembrance.

The triumph of Our Lord's enemies was complete. They had avenged themselves fully on Him for holding them up to scorn and denouncing their hypocrisies. He had gained a great hold on the people, He had spoken of a new era in religion. For a while they had feared Him, but now their power was confirmed, they could go on in their own way as before, no more would be heard of this dangerous movement. He was safely dead, and they could sate themselves with the memory of His utter failure, His frightful sufferings, His indelible disgrace.

The followers of Jesus were discouraged and broken. Simple, uncultivated men, called from their fishing-nets to follow One whose works they saw, but whose ideas they could not comprehend, their faith failed under the trial, they were "scandalized" in Him. The Holy Ghost was not yet given to them, Satan still had power to sift them like wheat. They laid aside their hopes of the re-establishment of the kingdom of Israel, and of sitting at the right hand and at the left hand of their Master. They hid themselves, or hastened away to their homes and previous daily labors. None kept the faith but the Blessed Virgin Mother; she alone, who possessed the secret of His divinity, was able to trust in His promises and look forward to His triumph.

There were others too, some curious, or indifferent, some who were concerned in the passion, like Herod and Pilate. Conscience may have awakened a momentary remorse in them for their fatal errors and injustice. But their victim was dead. He could never reappear. Their crimes were hidden in His sepulchre. Some remembered that there had been words spoken about a rising from the dead on the third day. A very absurd expectation! Still, to prevent any mistake or imposture, or miracle even, they took proper steps to have the sepulchre guarded by a band of resolute soldiers. Certainly all was over.

II. The Sabbath drew its veil of calm over the tragedy of the days just gone. Men rose relieved on the first morning of the new week to resume their usual life. They were met by startling tidings. The Roman guard had abandoned their post and fled in terror, saying that at dawn the dead had come to life, and passed through the unopened door of the sepulchre. Then some women who had gone early to the tomb hurried back and related that angels had

appeared and declared that Christ was truly risen. Peter and John then went and found the Sacred Body no longer there. Still, so little did they realize what had happened, that Mary Magdalene, when she first saw the risen Lord, mistook Him for the gardener of the place. After this, Jesus appeared in the upper chamber before ten of the apostles, and another time when Thomas was present; again to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, then to five hundred at once among the mountains of Galilee, and to the apostles by the shore of the Lake of Genesareth. Many times during the forty days He instructed His disciples concerning the kingdom of God, and at last ascended to heaven in their sight from Mount Olivet.

What a wonderful change was wrought at once in the apostles' minds by the knowledge of the Resurrection! What a revulsion from doubt to certainty, sorrow to triumph, despair to faith and confidence! It was a change for them as from darkness to sunshine, even as from death to life. The world had seemed to be shattered, and an abyss opened beneath their feet, when all their beliefs and hopes, all thoughts and certainties, collapsed at once at the death of their beloved Master. Now it was as if the solid world had been created anew. After all, they were not deceived, Jesus was still a reality, His words were true; a great future was still open before Him and them. What did the scandal of the Cross matter now, or weakness, or obscurities, or the triumph of his foes, since Jesus was really risen?

The Resurrection was the crucial test, the supreme proof of Christianity. It was the accomplishment of prophecy, the evidence of Our Lord's power and divine origin, the confirmation of all His teachings, the justification of men's belief in Him, and the assurance of a future life for them. It is the central support of Our Lord's religion. The apostles made it the keystone of religion, and made everything depend on it. Their own office, as they describe it, was to be "witnesses of the Resurrection." St. Paul, in order that he might be a witness of it with them, was vouchsafed a sight of Our Lord in vision, as he had not seen Him in the flesh. He tells us that if Christ be not risen again then is our faith vain, and our hopes as to the lot of departed souls are unfulfilled; then are we the most miserable of men, for we have surrendered our worldly opportunities, our possessions, and our lives, we have staked our all on an unreality. Such is the position that the Resurrection holds in the economy of the faith.

III. It is most instructive to consider the way in which divine Providence has made use of this crowning evidence of Our Lord's divinity. To our carnal ways of thinking there is an incompleteness about the revelation of the Resurrection. Our Lord might have exhibited Himself more widely than He did, and with much more striking effect. Nothing could be more conclusive than the miracle of His rising; nothing more easy than to verify it publicly. We might picture to ourselves Our Lord appearing in all His risen glory before the tribunals where He had been condemned, indicating His divinity before Caiaphas, His kingship before Pilate, His miraculous power before Herod, convincing them as He did St. Thomas by the sight of His wounded hands and side. We may imagine their consternation, their horror, the acclamations of the fickle populace, the glory of the position of the disciples. There could have been no attempt then to hush up the miracle by bribing the guards to silence; it would have been placed beyond the possibility of denial.

However, to speak familiarly, there was not as much made of it as might have been. Our Lord did not submit His Resurrection to scientific investigation, or to a juridical proof. The scandal of the Cross was proclaimed to all, it was recognized by official acts; but the triumph of Our Lord was made known only to a few. The Resurrection remained open to objection. The Jews were able to promulgate the lie that while the guards were asleep the disciples stole the body. As they said on Calvary, "If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the Cross," so it was open to them now to say: "He has not appeared to us; if He be really risen let Him come forth to the streets He passed through to Calvary, to the courts where He was judged; let us see the marks of nails and spear, and we are willing to believe. Is not our offer a fair and just one? Who could ask more than this of us?"

The ways of God are not as the ways of man. We should like to see His enemies convicted to their faces of falsehood and injustice; He leaves them to their obstinacy in error. They wish to contradict the truth, they do not wish to profit by the light to see the truth, and God, therefore, withholds it from them. He does not give His light for the confusion of its enemies, but only for the salvation of those who seek it humbly. There are some to whom God is pleased to give a more full revelation of Himself, as Jesus granted St. Thomas the proof he had irreverently demanded: but others had no right to claim this special favor, which He had the right to bestow

where He would. Some are privileged to see, but the majority are called to the greater blessedness of believing without seeing. To those who were to be teachers of others and witnesses to divine facts, Our Lord revealed Himself abundantly by many proofs, both before and after His Resurrection; but such complete evidence was not necessary for others. To men at large God gives only "evidence of credibility," not intrinsic proofs of the facts themselves, but evidence sufficient to prove that it is reasonable to believe His messengers, and indications that are enough to prove that they speak with the plenitude of His authority.

Thus did God proceed with regard to the Resurrection. Like all other spiritual truths it was to be obscure while sufficiently made known. Our Lord's prophecies had given men reason to expect that He would rise again. The fact was testified to by the hostile witness of the soldiers of the guard, as well as by the multitudes who saw Our Lord. These proved their sincerity by their lives, and by their death as martyrs; and God set the seal of His approval to their words by giving them the power of miracles. The sufficiency of the testimony to the Resurrection is shown by the innumerable conversions among those who had every opportunity of judging and testing the truth. What sufficed for them would have sufficed to convert all others, had they not allowed passion to blind their eyes and harden their hearts. Had they yielded to grace and followed the light, they would have been led by God to a degree of knowledge and certainty superior to any that rises even from the highest evidence of the natural faculties.

IV. Many complain of the difficulties and insufficiencies in the evidence in favor of Christianity and the Church. It does not come up to their notion of what the evidence should be. But we must not suppose that the incompleteness of the evidence is the real cause why so many men persevere to the end in rejecting the true faith. Those who urge such a pretext would probably continue to disbelieve, even were the evidence as clear as they demand it to be. To grant them more convincing proofs would be not only casting pearls before swine, but it would be increasing their responsibility and their sin. If a completer revelation were necessary for begetting divine faith in any souls, we may be sure that God would have given it to them. Those who find fault with the sufficiency of what God's Providence has done for their enlightenment are the counterpart of those Jews of old who found the evidence of the Resurrection im-

perfect. Our Lord anticipated that very objection to His Resurrection. He provided against it, and gave a proof of its insincerity. In the parable of Lazarus and Dives, Abraham is represented as saying to the rich man about his incredulous brethren, "They have Moses and the Prophets. If they believe them not, then neither if one rose from the dead would they believe." This was verified when Our Lord raised His friend, the actual Lazarus, from the dead. One did rise from the dead, and bore witness to Our Lord, but his enemies would not believe. The miracle was wrought before a multitude, it was noised abroad and well known. Lazarus was seen in public. Did men accept Our Lord the more on that account? No. For "the chief priests thought to kill Lazarus also, because many of the Jews, by reason of him, went away and believed in Jesus" (John xii, 10, 11). What wilful blindness, what a perverse choice of evil before good! It would be well nigh incredible, were not the examples of it too numerous. The appearance of Our Lord once more before Ananias, and Herod, and the Pharisees would, so far from converting, have stimulated them to attempt further outrages upon Him in His glorified state.

Even if the opponents of Our Blessed Lord had been forced by circumstances to admit the fact of His Resurrection, what would have been the gain to the kingdom of God in their souls? The recognition of a patent fact is not the faith which justifies, and which moves the mountains of sin. The conquest of the intellect is not the same as gaining the heart; and unless this be done, the fullest knowledge will not change men's lives for the better. The sight of Jesus actually rising from the dead would not have strengthened the wavering mind of Pilate, or taught him to follow strict justice instead of selfish expediency. It would not have purified the sensual soul of Herod and silenced his mocking criticisms. It would not have humbled the arrogance of the Pharisees, or changed the furious hatred of the chief priests into gentleness and love. Even though they saw, they would not have believed, their passions were fatal to faith.

So it is in general. The real obstacles to belief are the capital sins, pride, covetousness, lust, sloth, and the rest; all that we hear about flaws in the evidence, and proofs that will not stand criticism, is but an excuse to conceal the real reasons for men's incredulity. Let us not think that a fuller revelation of divine truth would break down that unbelief; on the contrary, it is the hardness of men's un-

belief that prevents God from giving them the further revelation. So we read of Our Lord in a certain place that "he *could* not do any mighty work there," and the reason was "because of their unbelief" (Mark vi, 6; Matt. xiii, 58). This was doubtless one of the reasons why the Resurrection was not manifested with greater clearness to the rulers and the chief priests. Their resistance to the light prevented Our Lord from giving them a still fuller light. They had so perverted their minds and wills that they would have been unable to apprehend that fuller light, and therefore it was not given to them. And such undoubtedly is the case in very many other instances. All indeed are not called to the possession of truth from the first; to some it is given only late in life; some have to work their way to it slowly and with much difficulty; but if any continue to the end without knowledge enough, or faith enough for their salvation, the reason certainly is that they have been guilty of deliberate resistance; for the Gospel assures us, that the true light enlighteneth sufficiently every man that cometh into this world (John i, 9). They may not have had the same great advantages that are given to some specially favored ones; but certainly the opportunity has been given them of attaining to those advantages in the course of time. There are varying degrees of fulness in the revelation that God makes to each soul, but there is no real incompleteness; such incompleteness as there may be is only apparent, and only lasts for a time.

The rejection of the Resurrection by the Jewish leaders enables us to judge of those who, in our times, reject either the whole or a part of the Christian system. There are abundant reasons, of a more or less selfish kind, which urge men to oppose religious truths, quite independently of the evidence in favor of these truths. Men are gained over by the spirit of the world and of Satan, and then they look out for arguments to support their predetermined position. They examine the grounds of faith, not with reverence and love of the truth, but with the desire of discovering weak points and objections. These are not hard to find. From the very nature of faith and the obscurity of its superhuman mysteries, there must be sufficient of difficulty and incompleteness to supply objections to those who seek them. Anything is good enough for that purpose. Transparent sophisms, glaring falsehoods, self-contradictory statements, or arguments already a thousand times refuted—any rag will do to cover their nakedness, and to hide their enmity to truth

under the decent appearance of sincerity. It is easy for men to deceive themselves by such means, easy too to deceive others, easy too to gain credit from the charitable for the sincerity of invincible ignorance; but God is not to be deceived. The fact remains that truth has been sufficienly revealed to them; it has spoken to them, though perhaps as Jesus spoke to the Jews, "in parables; that seeing, they may see and not perceive; and hearing, they may hear and not understand" (Mark iv, 12).

V. Revelation must of necessity be incomplete, in this sense, that though it be complete enough for God's purposes in us, it does not unfold divine mysteries to us in their entirety. Our capacities are very limited. God may say to us, as Our Lord to the apostles: "I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now" (John xvi, 12). Our minds can not rise to the height of divine mysteries, our speech can not convey them; it is not given to man to utter them, as St. Paul says of those things which God showed him. Such knowledge would also increase our responsibilities beyond our strength; it would be a source of danger to us, "lest the greatness of the revelations should lift us up" (II Cor. xii, 7). Even in the case of the great apostle of the Gentiles, the special revelation of truth necessitated a course of temptations and buffetings which he found almost unendurable. Many things made known to us were held back from the Jews, as being too advanced for their stage of spiritual and general cultivation. Our training is somewhat more complete, but it is far from being perfect; we can receive more than they could, but yet not all the abundance of divine truth.

We would gladly know more than we do. There are mysteries of God's nature and of His Providence toward the world, mysteries in human life and in our future lot, which we speculate upon, and try to fathom, but in vain. Man's appetite for knowledge is insatiable. Yet we can not force an answer to our questionings; those who insist are confounded like the builders of the Tower of Babel. We must be content with such partial glimpses of great truths as God has given us, and we must accept them also on such a kind and such a degree of evidence as He considers suitable. If we revolt against the conditions which He has appointed to us, instead of reaching greater light we shall only plunge ourselves into hopeless confusion and uncertainty.

We know little indeed, but yet it is much. It is far more than we

could possibly attain to by ourselves. It may be a mere outline, a mere glimmering of light, but it is an indication of the riches of knowledge reserved for us in eternity; it will be completed when we are made capable of it there. It is much also because it suffices for all our needs; it is enough to enlighten us about many things that are obscure, it is enough to give us a consciousness of perfect security, it is enough for the guidance of our lives and for our salvation. At the same time, it is not enough to satisfy irreverent curiosity, or to compel the assent of those who deliberately resist.

Let us remember the great privilege of those who were selected by God to see and understand the mystery of the Resurrection. We have received a somewhat similar privilege that demands our deepest gratitude. Like the apostles we have a knowledge and a firm assurance of truth far beyond what has been granted to others. God has revealed Himself to us; Jesus Christ, His only Son, has been present with us; not indeed in the same way as in the upper room, but with the same efficacy in confirming our faith, and drawing our hearts into union with His.

XXIV. THE UNITY OF TRUE RELIGION; OR, IS ONE RELIGION AS GOOD AS ANOTHER?

BY THE RT. REV. JAMES BELLORD, D.D.

"Every kingdom divided against itself shall be brought to desolation."—Luke, xi, 17.

SYNOPSIS.—I. The lifegiving strength of unity clearly recognized. This is evident in the (a) material world; (b) world of art; (c) of letters; (d) of music; (e) in the military world; (f) economic world; (g) political world. Tendency nowadays is to unite, not only families, but cities, and nations.

II. Interest of the soul surpasses all other interests. Unity of spiritual purpose of creation, hence unity of moral law; hence unity of religion. Proved from reason as well as from revelation. Catholic Church always insisted on the necessity of unity. The opposite doctrine a delusion: its effects.

III. Proofs of unity. Argument of design proves unity in the material creation. Man is the crown of creation. His spiritual concerns the most important; hence the creation of the supernatural order.. There should also be unity in this order.

IV. Absurdity of the position that disorder is God's rule for the supernatural order. This theory, the theory of Non-Catholic world, condemned by the Scriptures, (a) by the Old Testament; the Jews had one God; one form of worship; one sacrifice; one temple; one priestly race, etc. The prophecies foretold a more perfect Church. These fulfilled only by the unity of the Catholic Church. (b) By the New Testament: 1, by Our Lord in His use of the parables of the kingdom of God; 2, by His prayer for unity. (c) By St. Paul: Many exhortations to unity.

V. Unity found nowhere outside the Catholic Church. Evils of lack of unity. Final exhortation.

I. Unity is strength; discord is weakness; internal dissension is destruction. Nothing is more universally true, nothing more generally recognized among men than this. For a thing to be perfect, and fit for its proper purpose, it must have unity and harmony in itself; when it loses these it can no longer do its work, it is on the way to dissolution. Decomposition, whether of material substances or of human organizations, is nothing else than the breaking up of the bonds of connection and subordination in the component parts, or in other words, it is the loss of unity. A poem,

a play, a picture, must, according to the rules of art, have unity of subject, of treatment, of style. An army in the field needs the strictest unity and harmony if it is to be successful. If it consists of contingents from different allied nations, each under its own independent commander, differences of opinion about questions of strategy will arise and can not be reconciled; national jealousies will cause friction, the various parts will not act together as one body; every operation will be attended with great difficulties, the advantages of numbers, discipline, and good equipment will count for so much less than they ought, and it will suffer defeat at the hands of an inferior enemy who acts with unity and decision. A country is weak if its population is divided into hostile parties, with opposite views and inconsistent interests. A government can not maintain order or satisfy the people, it may even fail to maintain the country's independence, if its ruling members have no harmony among themselves. On the other hand, it frequently happens that a small party in a state gains control of power, when it is well-disciplined, acts together with one purpose, and subordinates private inclinations to the general cause. In a large country the spectacle that inspires most admiration is, not the extent of territory, richness of soil, or the splendor of cities, but it is the unity of the whole; a unity that is expressed in a universal love of country, a submission to authority which is not the result of force or fear, the amalgamation of so many diverse individuals in one common spirit. This is the surest indication of greatness and power, and affords the best promise for the future. Whenever a number of persons have a common object, whether it be their education or their pleasure, whether it be buying and selling or manufacturing, whether it be resistance to oppression or increase of wages, whether it be politics, or war, or discovery, or science, they unite and organize themselves. As time goes on, it is found that more and more men in the world have the same interests in common, and that it is for the general advantage to enlarge their associations, and for nations to combine with nations, as laborers with laborers, and trades with trades. The tendency is for mankind to become more dependent on one another, and so more closely united. A failure of one country's harvest, or mischievous legislation in another, may make itself felt in every community of civilized men. The interests of each are becoming the interests of all, and the basis of organization is continually growing wider. Combination and unity were once limited

to each family; then families united into tribes, tribes into principalities, and these into countries according to the line of physical boundaries. Ages ago the Catholic Church commenced to form a comity of Christian nations, or a union of all civilized men. The religious discussions of the XVIth century checked that great advance for a while. Now we are looking forward from international unions to universal combinations of all mankind for their great common interests, peace, plenty, and progress.

II. There is one interest that is superior in importance to all others—the salvation of the souls of men. There is one common object of knowledge, of love, of worship—God. There is one law of action, invariable in all times and places, though always developing to its perfection on the same lines—the moral law. There has been one consecutive series of revelations on these subjects. These things are uniform, and the relations of men to them are uniform. Climate, and racial descent, and degree of education, and mode of life, make no change in matters of revelation, for they do not belong to the physical order. They are not touched by the vicissitudes of the world. Religion surely, beyond all other things, is a fit subject for unity and a fit object for organization to work on. In religious truths, and laws, and worship, there should be no place for discrepancies, and contradictions, and changes; for the source is God, who is immutable, and not man, who is changeable as the winds of heaven. The system of true religion must be sole and single; both in its inward essence and its outward manifestations there can be no plurality of systems, and no violation of harmony in the one system. Further, in accordance with the law of human action and progress, men should unite in one combination to pursue this one end. Apart from all distinct commands, it is reasonable *a priori*, that they should act with one heart and one soul, organizing themselves into one body, both for economy of effort, for the restraint of individual vagaries, for encouragement by mutual example, and for the very perfection and strength which belong to unity.

There is no more striking instance of human inconsistency than that this sacred ground of peace and harmony should be considered by many sensible, and, in their way, pious men, as the one natural battlefield of mankind. It is not wonderful that blasphemers, seducers, lying spirits, should arise, hating the truth and endeavoring to rend the seamless robe of Christ, nor that they should mislead many. It is natural that the corrupt heart of man should engender

sin against truth as against every other divine perfection. The wonder is that this state of things should be regarded as normal, harmonious with the healthy conditions of human nature, and in accordance with the mind of Christ. Yet in fact many do so far ignore the indications of the Old Testament and the distinct declarations of Our Lord, they so far contradict the laws of natural prudence and the dictates of reason, as to deny that religion is one, and that it should be in harmony with itself. They have lost all conception of the true character of religion.

Hence it is that such doctrines as these find favor: "One religion is as good as another. What each man believes to be truth, that is truth as far as he is concerned. It matters not what a man believes so long as he does his duty to his fellowmen. There is no such thing as absolute truth in religion. Let us have religion without dogmas. A religion should be comprehensive; its proudest title is that it embraces all shades of opinion, and that its members are free to accept or deny every article of its teaching."

Some religionists seem to consider that the true universality, or catholicity of religion, consists, not in teaching all truth, but in allowing men the widest latitude in denying all truth. The idea of heresy has been lost in a great measure; it is now considered simply an ill-mannered term of abuse; the word has no meaning because there is no reality that corresponds to it. According to the people of whom I speak, heresy is religion. The man who exercises his own independent choice, and bows to no authority, and binds himself definitely to no religious body, he is the ideal religious man of men. Yet he is the one whom the apostle denounces and bids us avoid. Those who hold to the teaching of Our Lord and the prophets on the point of unity, are treated in the same way as Our Lord and the prophets themselves; they are hated by all men. Perhaps no doctrine of the Catholic Church gives such offense as her teaching that true religion is one. Her most prominent characteristic, viz., her internal peace and harmony on matters of belief, which is one of the chief proofs of the divine presence in her, is regarded almost as a crime. This unity is set down as a result of fraud, or violence, or of ignorance and want of independence. So was Our Lord treated by the Jews. The proofs of His divinity were distorted into arguments against Him. His miracles were represented as proving that He had a devil and worked under that influence.

The doctrine that there is no absolute standard of religious truth, and that unity is unimportant is certainly a most convenient delusion. If this be so, and if one religion be as good as every other, then a man need never harass his mind in searching after truth, he can follow his taste and his interests in choosing his religion, he need never make any sacrifice to his convictions or his conscience, he need never abandon all to follow Christ, he is never called to embrace an unpopular religion. No wonder that, with these inducements, many men resist the stern doctrine of the Gospel, that religion is one only, and that salvation depends on our seeking it out with many labors, and embracing it at all costs.

III. Let us glance briefly at a few proofs of this important doctrine, that religion is one, that it is a well-organized, consistent system, having unity in itself. One of the chief indications of the action of God in the universe is the evidence, visible throughout, of intelligent design, accommodating all the parts to one another, and showing one dominant purpose in it all. The argument of design is one of the chief proofs of the existence of God. It proves that one supreme force controlled the whole of creation, that an infinite wisdom guided everything on a constant principle, and that this force and wisdom can be nothing else than God. Design is just the opposite of chance, disorder, irregularity; it amounts in fact to unity and harmony. These are the qualities of the material creation. "Thou hast ordered all things in measure, and number, and weight" (Wisd. xi, 21). One set of laws prevails everywhere. Myriads of worlds greater than our own are moving regularly through space; we can calculate their motions, we can examine their surfaces; and we find that they are regulated by the same laws of gravitation, and attraction, and heat that exist on this earth. With our microscopes we can discover living beings in the smallest particles of dust, or water, or of our own blood; in every one of these we can detect the same laws of structure that we find in our own bodies. There is an almost infinite diversity of creatures, organized and inorganic, yet every one of these has its appointed purpose, and does its share toward carrying on the progress of the universe. Many things are utterly opposite in character to one another, such as land and water, continents covered with eternal ice or shrouded in mists; deserts of burning sand where no life exists, and rich lands teeming with animal and vegetable forms; there are broad rivers that fertilize, volcanic forces that deal out destruction at intervals. barren moun-

tain ranges that produce nothing. Yet every one of these is related to all the others, every one has its appointed function in enabling the earth to support human life. There may be some superficial conflict, but there is a broad harmony prevailing through them all. Every drop of rain that falls, every ray of sunlight, every insect that works in coral reefs, every gnat that flits about for its hour of life in the sunbeams, every flash of lightning that shivers some mountain crag, every single leaf of every tree, each is independent in its action, yet they all combine without confusion in subordination to one common purpose. This regularity, this unity in diversity, is the great characteristic of nature, that is, of the material works of God. Science is ever discovering new harmonies, new examples of well-known natural laws; scientific discovery and prediction rest on the fact that uniformity prevails in all God's operations. It may be taken for granted that the same uniformity and unity will be found in all others of the divine works; and that the more elevated and perfect a creature is, so will it bear more distinctly impressed upon it these same characteristics of its creator.

Man is the crown of creation, the noblest of God's works, the master of the material world. The innumerable and lengthy processes of creation were all a preparation of this earth to be his abode; everything was moulded during countless ages that he might live, might exercise his faculties, and might accomplish his end—the salvation of his soul. Everything that exists is subordinate to the spiritual interests of man. For this great object God created two orders of things, the natural order of the universe for the physical needs of men, and the supernatural order, consisting of a revealed system of spiritual truths, laws, and worship. This supernatural order of human life is the last and highest effort of the divine action in the world. It is the final manifestation of God. It is the chief instrument of the glory which is paid to Him by His created works.

Is it conceivable that the characteristic quality which is so prominent in the natural order should be absolutely wanting in the supernatural? Is it conceivable that the beautiful harmony and unity which mark the inferior works of God, should be absent from the most important work of all; that God should have made such complete and regular provision for the secondary means of salvation, and only the most casual, scanty, and uncertain provision, for the primary means of salvation, viz., religious guidance? Is there no

analogy between the order of nature and the order of grace? The general truths of nature are certain, the laws of nature are immutable, the duties of life always the same, and they are clearly manifested to us. Would not God's action be inconsistent with itself, if He had left the religious order in the state that some men conceive; in a state of anarchy and lawlessness, uncertainty and discussion, divided against itself, split up into warring fragments, with no fixed criterion of truth, with no authority to command obedience? That is the ideal of the Christian Church according to the majority of non-Catholics. If the same were the divine ideal, it would utterly falsify the Scripture which saith "God is not the God of dissension but of peace" (I Cor. xiv, 33).

The modern theory of disorder as the basis of true religion has been accepted by non-Catholics as a convenient explanation of the religious phenomena of the last three centuries. Men have preferred their own deductions from abnormal facts to the direct evidence of the Scriptures and of Our Lord Himself. As unity is the most prominent fact of the Catholic Church, so the most prominent facts of non-Catholic Christianity are its multiplicity and its contradictions. They are facts indeed of religion, but they are not of divine appointment; they are an inevitable consequence of free-will and the misuse of it; like scandals in the Church, they needs must come, but nevertheless woe to that man by whom they come. Disorder and disunion must necessarily be found in men's apprehension of religion, as soon as they depart from the divine rule of faith; but the principles of divine government do not change like human institutions, according to popular demands. However widely men may revolt against the divine decree of unity and subordination, however attached they may be to free and independent disorder, however many religions they may start, God still maintains the one religion which He instituted, He maintains its internal unity and harmony; and in this century, as in the pages of the New Testament, He bids men accept that Church as the sole ordinary means of salvation for all the world.

IV. If it had been the will of God that the perfect revelation, that Christianity should consist of an anarchy of independent sects, and that each of these should enjoy a special internal anarchy of its own, we should have had some indication of this in the Holy Scriptures. The Jewish is the type of the Christian Church. We should have found evidence of a divinely appointed disunion, of

uncertainty as to doctrines, and independence as to laws and restraints; the prophets would have foretold, and the Gospel would have proclaimed the advent of a more perfect and universal religious disorder. What we actually find in Holy Writ is the oneness of true religion and its internal unity in the Old Testament; and in the New, not a change from unity to multiplicity, but the extension of the same principle of unity, and the promise of a more perfect and universal internal harmony.

1. Unity is as deeply impressed on the religion of the Old Testament as it is in nature. The central doctrine was the unity of God; even the Trinity of that one God was not revealed to the Jews. They were constantly reminded that they were the one chosen people of God, that their religion was the only one revealed from heaven, that all other religions were abominations before the Lord. They had an extraordinary unity of worship. It was not merely that there was one form of it, but there was only one Temple in which the ceremonial worship might be celebrated. None others but the members of one priestly family might offer sacrifice; and it was most sternly forbidden to erect altars and offer victims, even to the true God, elsewhere than on Mount Sion. There was one center of religious truth and law, one authority alone was appointed to decide disputed points, there was no sacred right of violating unity and establishing independent religious communities.

The prophecies all speak of the future Church as a far more glorious and perfect organization than the Jewish system. It is to be one kingdom extending from pole to pole, embracing the multitude of the sea, and the strength of the gentiles, the dromedaries of Madian and Epha, the flocks of Cedar, and the rams of Nabaioth. The islands, and kings from afar, and the children of them that afflicted the Church shall come bowing down, and they that serve her not shall perish. The Church is to be a more complete reflection of the divine perfections: "The Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen in thee" (Isa. lx).

The disintegrated Christianity that exists outside the Catholic Church can in no sense be called a united and universal kingdom; it does not in any way correspond to prophecy, it is rather a degeneration from than a perfecting of the former system. The progress of the world combines families into tribes, tribes into nations, nations into confederacies, it puts an end to private feuds and civil wars, and tends to discourage wars between nations, it organizes human

efforts of every kind throughout the world, and brings all men into closer relations with one another; progress in short promotes union; and the more united society is, the more perfect is it. The perfection of religion must also consist in unity and internal harmony. If it recedes from these, it is on the downward grade to dissolution, it is relapsing into the conditions of bygone barbarous times, it is inferior in character to the former Jewish system which it replaced. If it were not for the existence of the Catholic Church with its broad unity, its great numbers, its harmonious organization, Christianity, as it is outside the Church, would fail to accomplish ancient prophecy, and would be nothing better than a failure.

2. Turning now to the words that Our Lord spoke of the Church He was establishing, we find the same insistence on unity. His Church was to be a single, organized body, and not a mob of irresponsible individuals, nor a multitude of independent hostile communities. The kingdom of heaven is likened to one net containing fish of all sizes, to a tree whose spreading branches fill the whole earth and give shelter to all the fowls of the air, to a single field of corn which is oversown with cockle, to a compact lump of leaven which works through a large mass of meal, to a house founded on a rock. More definite still is the comparison of the Church to a sheepfold, which all must enter in one way. Our Lord anticipates those who hold that men can serve Him acceptably in different religions: "Other sheep I have that are not of this fold." If He had stopped there, it would have been a weighty argument for the non-Catholic view; but He disposes forever of that view in the final words of the same passage: "them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd" (John x, 16). Again at a most solemn moment, just before He gave Himself to death, Our Lord prayed for His Church. And what is the burthen of His prayer? It is the perpetual unity of the Church. "Holy Father, keep them in my name whom thou hast given me; that they may be one as we also are one. . . . And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in me: that they may be all one, as thou Father in me and I in thee: that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou hast given me I have given to them, that they may be one as we also are one, I in them and thou in me: that they may be made perfect in one; and the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved

them as thou also hast loved me" (John xvii, 11, 20-23). Is it possible to believe in the face of this that unity is a matter of no consequence, that no provision has been made for uniformity of teaching, and legislation, that any individual is at liberty to set up his own little conventicle, and select his own faith in opposition to the universal church?

3. The great Apostle of the Gentiles follows His Master closely in upholding unity, and denouncing sects and private opinions. "Be careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. One body and one spirit, as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all" (Ephes. iv, 3-6). "He gave some apostles, and some prophets . . . for the edifying of the body of Christ; until we all meet into the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God . . . that henceforth we be no more children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the wickedness of men, by cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph. iv, 11-14). And once more: "I beseech you, brethren, by the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no schisms among you; but that you be perfect in the same mind and the same judgment" (I Cor. i, 10). Finally there is a passage which denies all right of dissenting from the Church, and refutes the plea that men should examine for themselves, and decide privately without regard to unity: "Understanding this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is made by private interpretation" (II Pet. i, 20).

V. Let us apply these principles to the present state of the religious world. Put out of consideration the Catholic Church, and look only at the great numbers of Christians who have accepted these "blessed principles of the Reformation." What do we see? Not a holy city of Jerusalem, a vision of eternal peace, but a veritable Babel, a city of confusion. While formerly one identical religion prevailed over the whole of Europe, now one country has, perhaps, two hundred separate registered religions, each with a different set of doctrines, each condemning all the others. And within the limits of any of those small bodies, we shall hardly find any two individuals in complete agreement. Two churches of the same denomination will differ in every respect, in external forms and in doctrines, so that a member of one will hardly worship in the other church. Even in the same pulpit, on the same day, two ministers

of the same faith will preach two contradictory doctrines with impunity. On the gravest subjects, Baptismal Regeneration, Absolution, the Lord's Supper, Hell, the Atonement, the Resurrection, the Divinity of Our Lord, members of a church may be diametrically opposed, and yet equally orthodox, and equally free from the reproach of heresy. Is this state of things the perfection of Gospel religion? Is this the glorious vision revealed by God to the prophets? Is all this the one fold of Christ? Is this being one as Christ and His Father are one? Is this the glory given to Him by the Father, and given by Christ to His Church; a glory and a unity that will convince the world that the Church is sent from God? On the contrary this "liberty," and "broadness," and "comprehensiveness" have made Christianity a by-word and a mockery among civilized men; even the unlettered heathen recognize the unreasonableness of such a system of religion, and Protestant missionaries testify that their internal dissensions are the chief obstacle to the diffusion of what they call the gospel. The members of the sects are not so blind, but that they see at times the evils of disunion, and make some inadequate efforts to promote corporate reunion among themselves, or even with the Catholic Church. May God grant that many more may come to see clearly this most obvious truth, that unity is a mark of true religion, and may He grant them what they require even more than light, the strength to be true to their convictions, to rise superior to earthly interest, and to leave their country and their father's house to enter the land which the Lord their God shall show them.

XXV. OUT OF THE CHURCH NO SALVATION.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JAMES BELLORD, D.D.

I.

"The nation and the kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish."—Isaias lx, 12.

SYNOPSIS.—I. This axiom misunderstood by Catholics as well as by Protestants. The Protestant interpretation. This explanation must be rejected as against the goodness, justice of God and in opposition to the value of immortal souls. Such an interpretation akin to the doctrine of predestination of Calvin. Rousseau's attribution of this axiom to the Catholic Church.

II. The question of the salvation of individual souls outside the sphere of human judgment belongs to God alone. This truth is therefore to be applied in general, not to the individual soul. All the circumstances must be considered, v. g.: ignorance of truth, hereditary prejudice, etc. The true meaning.

III. Christ founded one Church—therefore all must belong. The testimony of Scripture on this point. Disobedience in this as well as other matters is sinful; death in sin is punished eternally. Ignorance when not voluntary not sinful.

IV. When not condemned for opinions but for neglect of divinely revealed truth. The persistent rejection of grace leading to death in sin is the one cause of damnation. Rightly understood this doctrine is no more intolerant than the requirements of the sects. Evil consequences sometimes follow from this law, but so too in respect to every other law. This doctrine not opposed to divine mercy or justice. In fact a very reasonable one, once it is evident that Christ founded one visible Church.

I. "Out of the Church there is no salvation." This is the brief expression of a very important doctrine, of a very great truth. It looks a simple and clear expression, but it is not without its difficulties. It lies open to misunderstanding; it may very easily be misrepresented so as to convey a totally false impression. Taken by itself and apart from certain other doctrines of the Church, it is sure to be misleading, not only to outsiders, but perhaps also to some members of the Church who do not look at it from all points of view. As it stands it might appear to draw an exact and definite line between good and bad, sheep and goats, and to show us at a glance who are saved and who are not, who are on the way to eternal life and who to eternal death. As to the great multitudes of mankind who are outside the visible unity of the

Church, who belong to other religious bodies or to no religion at all, the phrase seems to condemn them all, without exception and under all circumstances, to inevitable exclusion from the kingdom of God.

This misapprehension is generally current among outsiders as being the authentic belief of Catholics. Our enemies have not been slow to take advantage of it and turn it against the Church, making her appear cruel, and unreasonable; making her out as impugning the infinite mercy and infinite goodness of God, and attributing to Him harshness, cruelty, and injustice. Such persons are guided by their first impressions, and they do not take the trouble to inquire if these correspond with Catholic doctrine. They are too anxious about finding fault with the Church to be particular as to facts.

The Catholic doctrine then is *assumed* to be as follows: Every one who is not visibly and externally enrolled in the Church and who dies in that state, is lost forever. Christians belonging to all the different sects that have gone off from the one true Church, Jews, Mohammedans, Pagans are excluded from all possibility of salvation. However much or little they knew of divine revelation, however good the lives they lead, however they may have corresponded with grace and practiced such duties as they knew, not one of them can ever be saved. We are supposed to hold that there is no virtue, no service of God, no grace, outside the visible boundary of the Church. That salvation depends on a more external circumstance beyond the control of most men, on accidents of birth, education, character, opportunities, for which they are not responsible. That God, therefore, has created these uncounted millions with no other possibility before them than to be punished with eternal torments.

Such a doctrine is most shocking and blasphemous, it is revolting to the moral sense of mankind; and this is what is attributed to the Catholic Church. But this is no part of the Church's teaching. It is not found in Sacred Scripture, nor in any of the Church's creeds or dogmatic definitions, nor in any spiritual writer. It is impossible for Catholics to hold a doctrine that attributes such injustice to the most just God. It revolts them more than others, for they know more than others of the value of human souls, of the infinite mercy of God, of the duty of charitable judgments and desires concerning the salvation of men.

It was Calvin who first taught the abominable doctrine that God created certain of mankind for eternal loss. Some, he said, are

predestined to be saved, and will be saved, however badly they live; others are reprobate from the first, and however well they may live, they can not escape from the sentence of condemnation. Rousseau, in the last century, is principally responsible for fastening this calumny on the Catholic Church. He explained in a Calvinistic sense the maxim, "Out of the Church no salvation." The enemies of religion, finding this doctrine held by certain self-styled Christians, insisted on regarding it as an essentially Christian doctrine, and therefore as a doctrine of the Catholic Church. The Catholic phrase has been interpreted, then, in a sense directly contrary to the real one, and has been ever since made a standard reproach against the Church.

II. The words we are considering require explanation. They are not so clear and definite as they appear. To those who are acquainted with theology they are an intelligible summary of several points of doctrine. They know in what sense the expression is used, to whom it applies, and what limitations and exceptions are understood. Without such knowledge the phrase is unintelligible, like a chemical formula to the uninitiated.

1. It is evident that a vast subject like the salvation of the souls of all mankind, a subject of which the factors are infinitely various, can not be decided in all its details by one brief phrase. The dealings of God's mercy and justice with millions of souls, all placed in different circumstances, are too complicated to be easily fathomed by us. It is not for us to reckon up each man's secret dispositions, his intentions in every act of his life, his excuses, the degree of his good faith, and the amount of his deliberate malice. Even his overt and visible sins are beyond the reach of our judgment. We can hardly judge of our own guilt on all occasions, much less of another man's guilt whose mind we can not read. His sin perhaps may be his misfortune rather than his fault; it may arise from natural rather than from moral deficiencies; that which is a grave sin in one may be excusable in another. And further, when life is already over and one is on the brink of death, there are mysteries of divine mercy and justice which take place in the departing soul, and may even then change the whole current of the previous life. There are intricate ways, outside the course of God's ordinary providence, which may lead many a soul to life. No maxim however true, no external test applied to a portion of life, can solve the question of the destiny of all mankind, nor even of one single soul.

2. The secret of men's salvation is rigidly reserved from us. Like the date of the day of judgment, which was not made known to the angels of heaven, so this secret has not been included in the revelation made to the Church. We have been only told in general terms of heaven, and hell, and purgatory. We know that many are lost eternally. We know by certain special revelations, or by the Church's decrees of canonization, that some souls are in heaven. But as to the destination of any other souls, and as to the future lot of ourselves and others, we are in the profoundest ignorance. The knowledge is not essential to the working out of our salvation; it would be harmful, and God, therefore, has not given it to us. The Apostles were troubled about the future and asked, "Lord, are they few that are saved? But He said to them: Strive to enter by the narrow gate; for many, I say to you, shall seek to enter and shall not be able" (Luke xiii, 23, 24). The words, "Out of the Church no salvation," convey to us a general truth which we can not apply to particular instances. They are like those words of Scripture: "He that believeth not shall be condemned" (Mark xvi, 16). We can not gather from them what God is unwilling we should know; they will not help us to extort His secrets from Him.

3. In regard therefore to the numbers of the elect and of the lost, the Church has made no definition, and there is liberty of speculation. We have only some general principles which are interpreted differently by different persons. Some have taken broader, some stricter views, according to the different points of view, or the circumstances of different lands and epochs, or the greater rigor or leniency of their own characters. In a society where all men have learnt the truth, where there is no excuse for ignorance and no involuntary prejudices of education, the maxim would bear a more strict and severe sense. Any one who deliberately abandoned the external communion of the Church would be justly regarded as placing himself, until he should repent, on the road to hell. But in a community which is ignorant of the Catholic faith, which has been grossly misinformed about it, in which men possess a sufficient minimum of Catholic doctrine and seem to serve God according to their lights, the phrase must bear a much more lenient construction, and it will not justify us in asserting that any particular man is lost eternally or will be lost.

III. Let us now consider what is the exact meaning of the maxim, "Out of the Church no salvation." The principle of it is admitted

by all men who profess any form of religion. It means generally, that there are certain conditions of salvation imposed by Jesus Christ; that among those conditions is a law of belief imposed on the intellect and a certain membership with the body of Christ's followers; and that these conditions bind all who have come to the knowledge of them.

1. We learn from the Old Testament and the Gospels that Our Lord established one body of men, to teach one body of truths, and to gather His followers into one organization of world-wide extent. This society was modelled, not in the form of a mob; nor of a kingdom in a state of anarchy divided against itself; nor of a collection of separate nations, each under its own standard, under separate rulers, with different internal arrangements, and all at war one with another; but it was in the form of a kingdom, one, united, solid, and strong, and universal. Such an arrangement was necessary in order to secure a consistent teaching, to prevent the introduction of error, to keep up the communication of part with part, and the sense of brotherhood among members, and to enable them to present a united front to the attacks of their enemies. To this society was committed all the machinery of salvation, doctrine, worship, the Sacraments, laws, and the continual presence of the Holy Spirit of God.

2. The foundation of one such Church implies an obligation on all men to embrace it. But particular commands are not wanting. The Church was appointed to teach all men. To hear it is the same as hearing Jesus Christ Himself, to despise it is to despise Him. He that heareth not the Church is to be esteemed, not as a different branch on the same trunk, but as a heathen and a publican. They who refuse to believe any doctrine of truth shall be condemned. St. Paul insists on the one Lord, one faith, one baptism. He pronounces anathema on any one who shall preach a different doctrine from that already delivered. He forbids sects and religious differences. The heretic is to be cut off from association with the faithful, and is not even to be saluted in the streets. St. John threatens eternal death to any who shall take away from the words which God had bidden him proclaim. And to go back to the Old Testament, our text declares that out of the Church of the Messias there shall be no salvation: "The nation and the kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish" (Isa. lx, 12).

3. Under these circumstances, membership in the Church is the

chief external condition of salvation, it is the appointed form of enrollment in the army of Christ. God has demanded this act of open profession and of our submission to his orders, in addition to spiritual service of mind and heart. It is not for us to say that external observances are less important than those of the soul; it is not for us to keep back according to our whims a certain portion of that holocaust of service which God requires of us. Whether more or less important, all that He commands is essential. We may pretend only to refuse Him a part, but our attitude toward Him is one of revolt. Deliberate disobedience is a sin, and those who persist in sin and die in it, are cut off from God forever. Whether it be keeping holy the Sabbath Day, or receiving the Body of the Lord, or embracing the Church which He founded, for those who disobey and persist there is no salvation.

4. Now we inquire who are affected by the command to accept the Church under penalty of eternal punishment for not doing so. Is it every man who under any circumstances is outside the Catholic communion? Certainly not. Laws bind only those who know of them. Penalties are for those only who deliberately disobey. The word, "Out of the Church no salvation" is to be viewed as an ordinary law. It is said of ordinary cases and not of exceptions. It is not applicable to those who are outside the scope of the law. It takes no account of those to whom the law has not been promulgated. Any who by no fault of their own are outside the unity of the Catholic Church will be judged by another law, by that which they do know. Penalties are not for the ignorant, but for the disobedient; and disobedience resides in the will, and not in external circumstances which are beyond one's own control. The accidents of birth or education can not be imputed to any one for blame. A person is not disobedient because he has been born outside the Catholic Church; he is not in rebellion to God while, knowing nothing of the religion founded by Jesus Christ, he remains in a false one which he honestly believes to be true. That which would be a grievous sin in an enlightened man, is no sin to him, because, on our supposition, he is not morally responsible for it. "Out of the Church no salvation," means no more than this, that those who know sufficient of the Catholic Church to recognize or suspect her divine authority and the obligation they are under of submitting to her, and who deliberately disregard the command of God, are guilty of a mortal sin, which separates them from God's kingdom on earth,

and will cut them off, unless repented of, from the kingdom of heaven.

IV. We may see now what the maxim does not mean. It does not mean that a line is drawn between men by a merely external circumstance, a thing which may often be considered as an accident for which they are not responsible. It certainly does not mean that all who are in outward communion with the Catholic Church will be saved, and that all who are outside will be condemned. It does not mean that men are created to be lost, or placed in a position where they can not save their souls, or punished in any way for what they can not help. Neither does it mean that any one is rejected by God simply for his opinions, as they say. The Catholic Church holds as firmly as any one that men are not amenable to punishment for opinions. She has often silenced those who held that opinions which they did not share were sinful and punishable. The question is, not of opinions, but of truths sufficiently revealed by God and known as such. Opinions are always free. But he who opposes positive divine truths, or who would reduce them to the level of mere opinions, he is sinning against God's highest law and most precious graces, he is placing himself outside the pale of salvation. If, however, the light which God has hitherto accorded to any one is not sufficient to prove the divinity of the Church to him as a truth, but only as an opinion; he is then, for the time being, exempt from the law which says, "Out of the Church no salvation."

The doctrine of the Catholic Church does not amount to a limitation of salvation, or a narrowing of the path to life. Even the phrase we are considering, though forever quoted as an example of the narrow views of the Church, does not warrant us in believing that any particular person is lost, no matter what his life or his creed may have been. We can not say of any one who is outside the Catholic communion, we can not say of any one even who dies under the ban of excommunication, that such a soul is necessarily lost. The Church declares that no one is lost by accident, but only by his own deliberate fault; that no single human being is outside the possibility of salvation; that no one suffers the torments of hell except for the most full, absolute, and persistent rejection of God's truth and grace.

In the Catholic doctrine of "exclusive salvation," as some people term it, there is nothing exceptional, as compared with other laws, nothing harsh, nothing narrow or intolerant. The creeds which find

most fault with it, admit the same themselves in principle. Every denomination which holds to a revelation teaches that there are certain conditions of salvation; that any one who is to be saved must be united with a certain body by means of Baptism, or by belief in Our Lord Jesus Christ, or in the unity of God, or in the Bible. It is a difference of degree only and not of principle. The Catholic Church requires union with a definite organization that teaches the whole of revealed truth; other religions require union with an indefinite body in holding some portions of divine revelation. The community with which the Catholic Church commands us to be united is, if we want all its members from the Apostles to the present day, only slightly smaller than the body to which our opponents would have all men united in order to salvation. Their "comprehensiveness," as they call it, is by no means universal for all mankind, and is only slightly wider than the Catholic "narrowness." And further still, the separated sects are not altogether free even yet from the taint of Calvinism, and most of them would probably exclude great numbers of the human race from the bare possibility of salvation, while the Catholic Church, as we have seen, excludes none. They have little reason, then, to bring the charge of intolerance and narrowness against the Catholic doctrine, or to speak of it as an exceptional and atrocious teaching.

But, it may be said, the insistence on visible union with the Church as a condition of salvation does place a limit, and draw a line of exclusion, and furnish an occasion of transgression to many souls. No doubt it does. But the same consequences attach to every other law. The law of private property, in like manner, has its correlative in a vast class of transgressions created by it. If there were no rights of ownership there would be no crimes of covetousness, pilfering, robbery, fraud, swindling, embezzlement and the rest. The existence of that law and of those offenses, draws a definite line of separation, and cuts off many, we know not precisely whom, from ever entering heaven. Yet there is no harshness in this narrowing of salvation. Those who know the law have the power to obey it; if they offend against it and suffer its penalties, they have chosen their lot. They have to blame, not the law, but their own free action. If any are ignorant of the law or violate it inadvertently they are outside the scope of the law; they have not incurred the guilt of disobedience nor the liability to punishment.

There is nothing repugnant to the divine mercy and justice, or to

right reason in the appointment of certain conditions, external or otherwise, for the enjoyment of God's favors. Such a condition was placed on Adam in paradise, and on all Christians when it was said of Baptism: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he can not enter the kingdom of God" (John iii, 5). Such, too, is the duty of union with the one Church. We can see reasonable motives for such a command, viz., as a test of our sincerity and obedience, and as the means of bringing us more effectually into brotherhood with one another, and to the orderly reception of truth and grace from God. Such a disposition of Divine Providence must be both useful to us and an "act of great mercy." If God has so arranged, it is not for us to exercise our tastes or our fancies in the matter, we are bound to obey without questioning. It is folly to suppose that God could have made definite provision for our guidance, and then that we should have liberty to choose the terms on which we shall serve Him. If salvation were to be found by any man out of the Church just as well as in it, then the old prophecies about the kingdom of God would be mere dreams, the authority given to the Church, the command to teach, and the commands laid on us to obey, in fact, half the New Testament would be meaningless form and a solemn mockery. If Jesus Christ instituted a Church at all, it follows that, for those who have come to the knowledge of it, out of that Church there can be no salvation.

XXVI. OUT OF THE CHURCH NO SALVATION.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JAMES BELLORD, D.D.

II.

"God Our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."—Tim. ii, 4.

SYNOPSIS.—I. The Catholic Church the ordinary means of salvation. She is universal, indefectable, commissioned for all people, all times, therefore no other Church needed. Yet absolute visible unity with this Church not indispensable.

II. The law of visible membership in the true Church, the ordinary law. God has other laws and other graces for extraordinary cases. God loves all and Christ died for all. God is absolutely just and therefore considers all the circumstances. Allowance is also made for invincible ignorance. Material sin is not formal sin. Goodness of life indicates sincerity and brings graces for salvation even to those not corporally united with the Church. The Church teaches that all souls have the means of salvation within their grasp. She has condemned the opposite proposition.

III. The three conditions, according to Père Lacordaire, affecting the Gentiles and all now outside of the true Church are: (1) Living up to the truth as far as it is known. (2) Living up to a higher degree of truth as soon as it is known. (3) Death in the love of God. Sincere rejection of the Church through invincible ignorance required of all who are not members of the true Church. But ignorance and sincerity not as widespread as some think.

IV. Hard to see how men can be ignorant nowadays when so many opportunities present themselves for knowing the Church. St. Bernard on this point. Men are prevented from seeing the truth by self-deception, by selfish reasons of worldly advancement, etc. God's laws are very often broken and so, too, this law; for all such, the doctrine is true that outside of the Church there is no salvation.

I. The Catholic Church is the ordinary means of salvation appointed by God for all mankind. One such Church is sufficient for all purposes. It is the authorized teacher of truth, and is the one source from which all other religions have derived whatever of Christianity they possess. It is the appointed channel of God's graces through its worship and Sacraments. It is spread abroad over the world, illuminating every man who comes into this life, made known with more or less clearness to most men. On account of its gift of Catholicity, it does not need to be supplemented by other religions adapted to varieties of time or of nationality. On

account of its indefectibility it can never need to be reformed from outside, or replaced by another religion as time goes on. The Catholic Church alone was commissioned to preach the Gospel to every creature. To her alone Christ said: "He that heareth you heareth me" (Luke x, 16). To her alone did He promise the continual guidance of the Holy Ghost and His own abiding presence. No subsequent revelation has recalled that divine commission. It is therefore one of the first and most essential preliminaries of salvation, that every man who has learned of such a Church should seek it out indefatigably; and that, when he has discovered it, he should embrace it, whatever sacrifices that course may involve. Every one should remember that the Church of Christ is not a merely voluntary association for persons of similar views or of the same nationality, formed for the convenience of praying in common and sharing the expenses of worship; but it is the one, indivisible Ark of Salvation appointed by God and necessary for all mankind.

Now when we look forth over all the races of men on earth, a difficulty spontaneously rises. There are and have been in every age many millions of men who can never have had any knowledge of the Catholic Church. It was not known throughout Judea immediately on Our Lord's Ascension; it was not carried throughout the world by the Apostles for many years; even now there are doubtless vast numbers to whom it has never been preached. There are many to whom the Catholic Church has been so represented by designing men that they are full of inevitable prejudice against it, and hate it as being the synagogue of Satan. Can they be blamed for their condition and held responsible for it by God? Out of all those multitudes there are some who are acquainted with the chief doctrines and laws of the Catholic Church and who observe them carefully, and many who have received the Catholic Sacrament of Baptism, although not from Catholic hands. There are some who know only of the existence of God, the future life, and the primary laws of morality, and who observe with most admirable constancy such precepts as their imperfect religion lays upon them. If some of them are in bad faith, some at any rate know no better, and do their best according to their lights. What is their fate? Are they foreordained to eternal loss? Are they absolutely without the means of escaping it, because, through no fault, they are outside the visible unity of the Catholic Church? Many uninstructed Christians outside the Church, pressed by this difficulty, have thought that the unity

of the Church and the necessity of membership in it were inconsistent with the doctrine that salvation is possible for all men. They have therefore rejected the unity of the Church, and have tried to comfort themselves by thinking that one religion is as good as another, that no one religion is necessary, that salvation depends on each man's private goodness of life, and not on his belief or his form of religion. But there is no need in this rejection of one essential part of Christianity, it is possible for every individual soul to be saved even though the Catholic be the only one Church of Christ. The maxim "Out of the Church no salvation" does certainly not mean that every one outside its visible unity must of necessity be excluded from heaven.

II. 1. We must first recall what has been already remarked: that the law is for ordinary cases, for those to whom it has been promulgated, and it does not touch exceptional cases, whether they be many or few. Visible incorporation in the Church is only the *ordinary* means of salvation. There are exceptional means for exceptional cases. There are two great classes of men, those who have knowledge of the Church, and those who are in invincible ignorance. Union with the Church is the strict command laid on one set; but God in His goodness has extraordinary means of salvation for those to whom He has not communicated His ordinary commands. Outside the ordinary dispensation of grace, there are uncovenanted mercies, which have not been specified and laid down and reduced to system, because they do not concern those who are called under the ordinary system. The fullness of knowledge is not for us. Like as with the Apostles we have no right to ask, "Are they many that shall be saved?" The answer to us as to them is that we must attend to ourselves only, for our difficulties are great enough to absorb our entire energies. It is enough for us to know that God is good and wise, and that the souls of those outside the ordinary covenant are safe in His merciful hands. The investigation of nature shows us every day new marvels of the power and wisdom of God in the physical world. We may well believe that in the world of souls there is a similar variety of methods, richness of resource, and wonderful ingenuity of grace in bringing about salvation. The ordinary paths of Providence are all that we know, and those most imperfectly; yet we have seen enough of the extraordinary miracles of patience and love shown to those who have profaned God's most sacred gifts, to be assured that patience and

love will not be withheld from those others, God's less favored, and perhaps less guilty children.

2. Next we may recall that most certain of all certainties, that God is good and gracious to all in an infinite degree. All men are His creatures, all are in His image and likeness, all are the object of His love. Our Lord died for them all without exception. With God there is no respect of persons, there is no difference of Jew or Gentile, bond or free, civilized or barbarian. He has placed each where He will have him for the working out of His merciful purposes, and He has equally care and love for them all. Of old, certain narrow-minded persons maintained that Our Lord had died only for the redemption and salvation of the elect. St. Augustine refuted this heresy and the Church condemned it. "Thou lovest all things that are, and hatest none of the things which thou hast made; for thou didst not appoint, or make anything hating it. . . . But thou sparest all: because they are thine, O Lord, who lovest souls" (Wisd. xi, 25, 27).

3. And further we know that God is infinitely just. He renders to every man according to his works, except that His mercy moderates the vigor of strict justice. It is blasphemy to think that God could show undue severity or harshness to any man; and still less that he could punish any one for what is not his own fault, for the dispositions that He Himself has made concerning any man. Justice, no less than mercy, must take account of all extenuating circumstances in each offence, of the inherited weakness, the predisposition of the character to certain failings, the involuntary ignorance, the want of opportunities, the compensation made by suffering or by certain acts of virtue.

4. Catholic theology, again, lays great stress on the excusing power of invincible ignorance. There are great classes of deadly sins, such as heresy, disbelief, schism from the Church, hatred and opposition to her—sins, any one of which is sufficient to cut the soul off from God forever; and yet they are cloaked away out of sight, or rather, are extinguished as sins by the covering of invincible ignorance. For such there is no responsibility and no penalty. The Church has declared that negative infidelity is no sin; and it is the same with those who are in heresy and outside the Catholic Church. In cases where that state is simply negative, where there is no positive influx of the will proceeding on full knowledge toward the rejection of truth, there is no sin. A man's belief may be

heresy, but he is not of necessity guilty of the sin of heresy. A creed which includes false doctrines or rejects true ones is heresy—objective heresy—material heresy. But formal heresy, that which constitutes the sin, consists in the obstinate adherence to that which has been sufficiently shown to be heresy. Where there is invincible ignorance, the adherence to material heresy is not an act of formal heresy. Salvien, a Catholic writer of the fifth century, speaks of such heretics: "They are heretics, but not knowingly. The truth is really with us, but they think it is with them. They are in error, but their intentions are good. How will they be judged at the last day? That is for the Judge to know." Thus even in days when the general feeling about heresy was much more acute than in those lukewarm days, when heretics were generally very different men from those who profess heretical doctrines in our age, full allowance was made for invincible ignorance and good intentions; and the possibility, in consequence, of salvation for those visibly outside the Church was recognized.

5. We may take account too of the good life and virtue of those who are outside the Church. There are many who are models of regularity, piety, charity, uprightness, and courage. All this is, of course, no substitute for faith, for union with the Church; still less will it do instead of sincerity. It is not possible to dispense with the essential conditions of salvation; we can not make a compromise with God and offer Him love instead of honesty, veracity instead of chastity, good works instead of true belief, or the natural instead of the supernatural. But all goodness meets with its due reward from God. Correspondence with one class of graces will be the means of meriting another kind. An act of benevolence may move God to unveil the light of truth or grant strength to make some necessary sacrifice, or it may lead to full conversion at the hour of death. Goodness of life, if it is consistent in its various forms, if it is deeply rooted in the life and not a merely superficial growth, testifies to sincerity, and gives us grounds for judging leniently and hoping well.

6. The Church, therefore, teaches us that all men without exception have the means of salvation in their hands, that they receive grace from God and can serve Him and please Him. This is involved in the condemnation of the two propositions, that "all the acts of infidels are sins," and that "no grace is given to those outside the Church." Hence any departed soul, however far it may have

been from visible union with the Church, may for all we know be saved; therefore the Church will not allow us to judge of any individual human soul that it is lost, with the exception of Judas alone; therefore she allows us to pray in private and offer the sacrifice of the Mass for the souls of each and all of the dead, and to hope for any one's salvation.

III. One of the great champions of religion in these latter times, Father Lacordaire, the reviver of the religious orders in France, has a conference on the means of instruction and salvation possessed by mankind before the coming of Our Blessed Lord. What he says applies equally to those of the present day who are outside the Church, and of whom many are in precisely the same position as the Gentiles of the earlier times. After showing how each of the principal systems of error contained enough truth at least to lead men to investigation and further enlightenment, he concludes by specifying three conditions as necessary, in such cases, for salvation.

1. "Men must practise the truth in the degree in which it is known to them." Some degree of truth has reached all mankind from God, either through ancestral tradition, or through their conscience, or, perhaps, imbedded among falsehoods and superstitions in their sectarian creed. Their responsibility is limited by that degree of truth. They can not go beyond it. If they are faithful to it, they have accomplished all that God demands of them, they have "fulfilled all justice." If that degree of knowledge should be insufficient for the supernatural life, God will certainly reward their fidelity to it, as St. Thomas Aquinas teaches, by some exceptional communication of the further truths needful for their salvation.

2. "Men must embrace and practise a higher degree of truth than they are born in, as soon as it shall come to their knowledge." "If he corresponds to the light which he knows, he will be led to the further light as yet unknown;" according to the word of St. John: "He that doth the truth cometh to the light" (John iii, 21). Life is a progress. This is the great law and duty of existence. To every man it is said at some time: "Friend, come up higher." He is gradually educated and prepared by increasing grace on God's part and increasing effort on his own, for the future reward. Eternal life, while gratuitous, is also a reward for work and progress achieved; to every soul therefore is given the call and the opportunity of making that progress.

3. "The last condition is to die loving God above all things, for

such is the aim of Christianity." According to the Apostle: "Love is the fulfilling of the law" (Rom. xiii, 10). If the true love of God be present it supplies all deficiencies; for it includes the desire to do all God's will, to repent of sin, to receive Baptism, to be united with Jesus Christ in such way as He has appointed, viz., through the Church. To this love any one will attain who has been faithful to the gradually advancing graces which God has bestowed on him.

Thus, according to the saintly Dominican, salvation is within the grasp of all men, in whatever condition of heresy, infidelity, or paganism they may have found themselves placed. By conforming themselves to the conditions mentioned, they fulfil what God demands of them, and they will find themselves in many instances led to the ordinary means of salvation, i. e., to visible union with the Catholic Church. But if that ordinary means has been closed to them by no fault of their own, if no honest effort on their part has been wanting, if the fullness of light and grace has been withheld from them by God's providence, then they are exceptional cases, "those, having not the law are a law to themselves; who show the work of the law written in their hearts" (Rom. ii, 14, 15); they are not judged according to the ordinary standard, their salvation is to be worked out in ways that are the secret of God.

From these various considerations we learn that, with regard to membership in the Church as one of the conditions of salvation, there are two alternatives, viz., to actual visible communion with the Church, or, on the other hand, the completest sincerity in rejecting it. The one is the appointed means of salvation, the other is the only excuse from observing it. The efficacy of this sincerity in dispensing men depends on the degree and the nature of their ignorance of the Catholic Church. An ignorance that is impenetrable and invincible by all their efforts is required, in order that a man's sincerity in rejecting the Church be absolute and excusable. Thus, in examining the law, "Out of the Church no salvation," we meet with certain considerations that widen our hopes as to those outside her communion, and now we meet with others which narrow those hopes again. When we come to reflect on the abundant means of knowledge, the rigid observance that is due to God's commands, and the perversity of mankind, we have reason to fear that invincible ignorance, and sincerity consequently, are not so prevalent as we should wish. We can not in general have good hopes

for the salvation of those outside the Church. Still we have no criterion for judging about individuals nor about the numbers of the saved and lost. We have no knowledge of the varying circumstances of so many men; even if we could read their minds, still we can not speculate as to the secret operations of grace in their souls during their last moment. We must judge harshly of none, and while we have grave fears we can lawfully indulge in hopes for each individual's future welfare.

IV. However broadly we may, in our charity, interpret the formula "Out of the Church no salvation," the truth remains that, "Narrow is the gate and straight is the way that leadeth to life; and few there are that find it" (Matt. vii, 14). It is not easy to see how those who live in the modern world of civilization can remain in absolute ignorance of the Church. The light of Christ "enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world" (John i, 9); and of Our Lord's messengers it is written, "Verily, their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the whole world" (Rom. x, 18). It is natural to think that God would call to the ordinary path of salvation all those who are within reach of it, and not leave such large multitudes to be dealt with as exceptions. When we see what means of information men now have, through conversation, reading, observation, when we remember the wide range of men's thoughts, and the universal communication of them, and the general attention which the Catholic Church attracts, it is impossible to think that there can be many men who have not at least suspected her divine authority, and been moved to further investigation. Internal grace always accompanies the outward opportunity, and it is certain that it must lead conscientious inquirers to full belief in the Church. It is probably true in our days as it was in St. Bernard's, that it is more difficult to escape from the knowledge of the truth than to attain it.

There is abundant reason for believing that great numbers, the majority perhaps, of those to whom an unwelcome truth is revealed, will refuse to accept it and prefer falsehood. It is easy to do this. God speaks first in a whisper, which can be stifled and disregarded; He does not crush the mind with evidence, but employs such as can be set aside if the will is obstinate. It is generally more profitable in a material sense to be outside the Church than in it, and to be on the side of Satan and the world rather than on the side of Christ. This consideration outweighs in many minds all present

truth and all future reward. The rejection of truth is a secret crime, it brings no disgrace before mankind, no loss in this world; it does not prevent a man from claiming and receiving the credit of uprightness and sincerity. It is not difficult for a man to be thoroughly dishonest and to persuade himself that he is sincere. Our capacity for self-deception is exceedingly great. And when our interests, our fears, our habits, the persuasion of others, all combine against the right, it is easy to make ourselves believe that the worse is the better reason. If it is easy for us to be insincere even in our adhesion to truth and goodness much more likely are we to overlook our insincerity in adhering to a profitable falsehood. Sincerity is too difficult a virtue to be very prevalent; and the inducements to the contrary are strong. Resisting the truth was common among those to whom Our Lord preached, and it is not likely to be less common when He speaks, no longer in His own person, but through the mouth of His Church. As of Our Lord's times, so of these: "Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than the light, for their works were evil. For every one that doth evil hateth the light and cometh not to the light" (John iii, 19, 20).

Much of the ignorance about the Church among men is the result of moral transgressions which make the soul incapable of seeing the truth. A great deal that claims to be sincere ignorance is sheer hatred of the truth. Many know the truth and will not acknowledge it. Very many more have received some inkling of the truth; some of them yield to negligence and allow themselves to be occupied by less important things; others shrink from a fuller knowledge because they know they will be convinced; and they vainly suppose that a deliberately chosen ignorance will shield them from the responsibility of disobeying the voice of God. There must be a great deal of this kind of sin in the world. When we consider the violations of all the other laws of God, of honesty, charity, truth, chastity, whenever there is the prospect of some gain or pleasure and the chance of impunity, we may be sure that the command to join the one Church of Christ will be much more widely violated, as the inducements to do so are so much greater. As with all other laws, so with the one we are considering; it is disobeyed, not so much because men are ignorant of it, as because they do not wish to recognize it. Under such circumstances men will be ready to grasp at any bad reason that seems to justify their determination.

Hence it is that we hear such unscriptural and unreasonable phrases as: "One religion is as good as another:" "A man will be judged for his life and not for his belief;" "Doctrines are but opinions, and God will damn no man for his opinions." All such statements are worth nothing as a justification for rejecting the Catholic Church, unless they are spoken in the most complete sincerity. But we can hardly think that they are so. They are not sound reasons for rejecting the Church, but rather excuses adopted in many cases to salve the conscience, to save the trouble of inquiry, to deceive oneself and others, and to make insincerity look like sincerity. We have reason to fear that among the bulk of non-Catholics there are many cases of ignorance which are false, imperfect, or feigned, many cases to which the phrase we are considering will apply in their narrowest sense; outside the visible union of the Catholic Church there is for them no salvation. Such hopes as we entertain for them must be based, not so much on belief in the possibility of their invincible ignorance, as on the wish that their knowledge may lead them when on the verge of death to recognize and enter the one Ark of Salvation.

XXVII. IS THE CHURCH INTOLERANT?

BY THE REV. P. A. HALPIN.

SYNOPSIS.—The very term intolerance is a menace.

I. Tolerance is not absolutely justifiable. Religious and civil intolerance. Religious intolerance must be upheld. The religious intolerance of the Church is her duty and her glory.

II. What is the history of Catholic intolerance? It is a calumny. It is misrepresentation. The spirit of the Church must be the spirit of its Founder.

There are very few words which have a more disagreeable meaning for the twentieth century ear than the expression "intolerant" which conveys the leading idea of the question which it is the purpose of this instruction to answer. The reason of the repugnance felt by our age for this term is because liberty, fraternity, equality, are the watchwords now as they were at the end of the eighteenth and during the whole nineteenth century. We are told that intolerance is not compatible with "liberty," that it disrupts "fraternity" and is a mortal foe to "equality." They tell us that the institution of which intolerance is predicated is an institution which is out of place in these times, and must be warred against by all those who feel it their duty to maintain the advanced civilization of to-day, of all those who take pride in upholding the spirit of the era, of all those who profess that the struggle of the period is a struggle for absolute emancipation from everything that savors of dependence or servility in any field whether of action or thought, whether of politics, literature, or science. Intolerance, they say, is a monster which must be destroyed. Intolerance is a tyrant which must be deposed. Intolerance is a bugbear which must disappear, otherwise the progress of man will be delayed, will be not only postponed but prevented and aborted absolutely. Intolerance is unwillingness to tolerate opinions or beliefs contrary to their own. It is bigotry. It is fanaticism. The wildest denunciations have been poured out against intolerance. My beloved brethren, you will not be surprised when I say that all this eloquence of vituperation has been launched against your Church, the Catholic Church, the Church of God.

Books are published everywhere, in every tongue, by gifted, by

mediocre, by very mediocre individuals, which are nothing more than diatribes against your holy religion. All their attacks may be summed up in this one accusation, that the Church is an uncompromising one, that there is no spirit of conciliation energizing in its head, its hierarchy or its members, that it is despotic and unreasoning and that therefore it is not divine, it is not the Church of Christ, but a travesty thereof, and a force which must be annihilated, for otherwise all tolerance, all religion, all charity will be banished from the abodes and from the souls of men. You have heard all this and you ask, and you have the right to ask: Is the Church intolerant? Is the whole world outside the Church tolerant? Are Catholics alone by the doctrines of their faith and the commands of their rulers compelled to be uncompromising, fanatical, bigoted and to repudiate all who are not of their way of thinking or of acting. To give you an answer let us explain (a) what toleration is, (b) what intolerance is, (c) and what is the history of the Church as an agent tolerant or intolerant in the affairs of mankind.

I. The question is religious intolerance. Suppose we affirm some maxims which in this connection are generally conceded by all right reasoning minds. A religion may be viewed in its relations to God, as a means of honoring Him, and of leading men to eternal happiness. This would seem to be the end of any institution which claims to be heaven born. Or it may—this religion—be considered in its bearing upon civil society whose interests—we use interests in a general sense—it may favor or contradict. A religion whose dogmas, whose practising would be in opposition to man's nature, his sentiments and his needs, a religion which would contradict the evident attributes and the sufficiently manifest designs of the Creator could hardly be looked upon as a religion conducive to God's honor or man's salvation. Such a profession would be condemned by God and the adherents of it would be reproved and pitied by every enlightened man. Moreover, a ruler could not in conscience tolerate within his states a belief whose tenets and spirit would be subversive of the principles of social morality, and governmental authority. Hence we must recognize two kinds of intolerance. There is religious intolerance which rejects as unapproved of by God every religion which possesses not the characteristics of truth. There is civil intolerance which proscribes the profession of every teaching and of every worship which antagonizes the welfare of society.

Religious intolerance regards professions in their bearing upon the future life, civil in their connection with the present life. The theologian examines a religion as to whether it is true or false, whether it comes from God or from men; the sovereign, the statesman to discover whether it makes or does not make for the interests of the Commonwealth. I say the interests, not the laws of society. For the true religion must always harmonize with the welfare of peoples, but it may find itself not in accordance with particular regulations, in which case it is logical to conclude that religion is not to be rejected, but the laws must be reformed. These two conditions have not always been sufficiently distinguished, yet they should be.

What have we to say of religious intolerance, understanding it as it should be understood? Certainly we must execrate that universal toleration which allows that all religions are equally good, or equally useless or harmless. The solution of this question depends entirely on our properly understanding the limits of ecclesiastical authority as well as the obligations which are imposed upon it by its position, or rather by its heaven descended mission of guardian of the spiritual welfare of the world. That the Church in this view must safeguard the minds of her children goes without saying. Error touching matters of faith she must sedulously, zealously and uninterruptedly condemn. This is apparent from the very nature of religious truth. Religious truth is not speculative only, it is besides eminently practical. Its object is not merely to teach men what they should know but just as specifically to teach them what to do. Every truth has a practical corollary for conduct. The man who believes that there is one only God must also admit that He alone is to be obeyed, that His commands are paramount, and that no voice is to be listened to which runs counter to His mandates. The man who believes that there is only one means of salvation must adopt that means and no other. The man whose faith tells him that there is only one road to heaven must put his feet on that road.

These illustrations have been used to show that belief is not theoretical merely, but reaches down to the deliberate thoughts, words, and deeds of every individual. His teacher and his guide is his Church, and upon that Church devolves not only the duty of pointing out for him the road, not only the duty of providing him with all the helps necessary for this spiritual journey, but upon that church rests the obligation to patrol that road and sweep it

clear of all obstacles, to eliminate if possible, or, if impossible, to minimize the dangers, and above all to keep the signals bright so that not for a single instant shall shadows or darkness lie upon it. Such a mission supposes that the vigilance must be active, alert, eternal. Everybody will concede that such a church must be unchecked, untrammeled, that such a church must have the right of way in her own sphere, that within her legitimate zone she possesses the privilege as well as the obligation of crying halt to all obtrusion and intrusion, and of saying so far and no further. Within these limits she can not be tolerant. In these cases intolerance should surround her like an atmosphere. Along these lines intolerance becomes a sacred prerogative. Along these lines tolerance becomes a crime. So much has been said against the Church because through all the years she has been so uncompromising where there has been question of the purity of her doctrine, or the integrity of her practice. The air has been made vocal with clamors against her so-called stubborn, unbending attitude. She is the mother of her children and her watchfulness has never slept. Like the mother who will interpose her own body between her offspring and the wild beast who threatens its destruction, the Church has never faltered in presence of any sacrifice entailed upon her in the discharge of her functions as the provider of sane nutriment for the minds of every member of her fold. She has been fearless in opposing every enemy of the faith and there never has been in all history such an undaunted champion of the rights of those entrusted to her care. They have branded her as intolerant when she was only faithful, they have stigmatized her as relentless when she was only true to the sacredness of her charge. Because she condemned the book, no matter who wrote it, the book which breathed the venom of infidelity, they called her an enemy of letters; because she repudiated the theory which was in germ a heresy, they styled her the foe of science; because she anathematized a principle which led to revolution and anarchy they named her the antagonist of civilization. She has suffered everything in promoting the spiritual, aye, and the temporal well being of the race. She has been a martyr to her mission and her duty. Yet she is an intolerant, a bigoted, an uncompromising institution, and her light is darkness, and her zeal is ambition, and her love is cruelty, and she deserves not a footplace among the habitations of men. When they cry out against her intolerance they hardly know the meaning of their clamor. In one

way their reproach is her glory. Yes, she is intolerant, yes, there are things she will not abide. She will not tolerate error; she will not tolerate atheism or infidelity, or any of the views which aim at the destruction of all religion, of all morality, of all civilization. All the truths of God she must uphold. All the sacred rights of men she will declare and fight for. She believes in liberty, but she is intolerant of license. She believes in fraternity but not in communism. She believes in equality of all men before God, but she respects the conditions in which the race finds itself. She will stand up for all rightful possessions. She will not brook injustice, oppression, or slavery. Poor and rich are alike to her, but woe to the capitalist who defrauds the laborer of his wages, and woe also to the laboring man who rises up in unjust violence against his employer. Yes, the church is intolerant, but this intolerance is not a badge of shame, but a crown of glory.

II. So much for intolerance in general. What is the story of the Catholic religion in this connection? We know how history has been written, we know, too, how the history of our Church has fared in the hands of her opponents. They, the boastful advocates of tolerance, have had very little tolerance for the Church. They proclaim that Catholic rulers and princes have not allowed in society any other religion than that of Rome. They assert, moreover, that this spirit of persecution was inspired by the very nature of the doctrines of the Church, that the Church commanded it, that it was inseparably connected with every fundamental Catholic principle. The Church, they say, has been the parent of modern persecution, exercising her sway not only over the minds of men, but over their persons and their possessions as well—in a word, that an essential doctrine of the Catholic Church is intolerance, religious as well as civil.

These two kinds of intolerance they urge are inseparable, that where we find one we find the other. In the words of Rousseau it is true of the Catholic Church that she has always taught the two sorts of intolerance, for, says he, "it is impossible to live in peace with those whom one believes to be damned; to love them would be to hate God who punishes them." This certainly is putting the calumny against us at its worst. How are we to reply? In the brief space allotted us a comprehensive answer is out of the question. We might gratuitously deny what has been so gratuitously asserted. But let us pause for a rapid if not complete in-

vestigation. Nobody wishes to deny that the Church must anathematize everything which contradicts the truth of which she has been made the guardian. What is heretical she must declare such, what is erroneous she must stigmatize as such, what is dangerous in morals or in faith she must proclaim as such. Still look at the marvellous compassion of this mother of souls. Has she ever stated that any one of the children of men has been irretrievably lost because he was not a member of her flock? There is no salvation outside of the Church, is one of her cardinal teachings, yet how often she tells of the possibility of those being saved who are not of her communion yet do all in their power to live according to the dictates of their conscience. So wide is her liberality in this particular, that she goes to the length of allowing her doctors to profess that if necessary God in such a case will perform a miracle. Is this true of all the sects? Is there any one so bigoted, so narrow, so uncompromising as the sectarian? We are told that Catholic governments have acted toward non-Catholic subject in a spirit of despotic intolerance! Be it so. Has their action been one suggested by any doctrine of the Church whose spirit is the Spirit of Christ, who hated sin but loved the sinner. Do we know all the reasons which actuated these rulers in their attitude toward those who did not belong to the religion professed by the State. We might ask what of Protestant rulers, what has been the spirit of their administration? They allege against us as a monument of ecclesiastical intolerance the Inquisition. What a host of calumnies have found shelter under the wing of that name. We simply say read its history aright, examine it to the very bottom. We say let reason, not imagination, not prejudice make the investigation, and the apologists of religion need have no fear, nor will any fair-minded individual be convinced that the Church is deservedly branded as intolerant. Let us go a step further; let us suppose that churchmen—as has happened—have enacted scenes that fill us with horror, let us grant that a Pope or Popes have acted in a manner to shock the Christian world by deeds of oppression, cruelty, yes, crime. What has that to do with the purity and charity and humanness inculcated by the Catholic faith? In that much they have not allowed themselves to be influenced by the gentleness of the Founder of our holy religion. A glance at the councils of the Church will reveal its true spirit. These are the words of St. Augustine and their spirit has been imbibed by ecclesiastical writers and princes who came after

him. He is writing to a proconsul of Africa begging him not to put the Donatists to death. He says: "Great as may be the evil you wish to abolish and the good you desire to procure, it is a task more onerous and useless to use force than to enlighten their minds."

This has always been the mind of the Church. The question which is being studied in this instruction is a vast one on account of its many ramifications and especially on account of the documents without number which have been published by friends and adversaries of Catholic doctrine. The teaching and the spirit of the Church has always been manifest. Doubtless its principles have been misunderstood in ages of less enlightenment than ours. Human passions mingling with religion and covering themselves with its sacred and sheltering name have acted with a zeal altogether false and have committed inhuman atrocities. The duty of the Catholic is to distinguish between false and prudent zeal and to judge accordingly. In a word the duty of the Catholic is to remember that the spirit of the Church is the Spirit of Christ, whose characteristic attitude toward all mankind is: "Come to me—because I am meek and humble of heart and you shall find rest to your souls" (Matt. xi, 29).

XXVIII. THE VISIBLE HEAD OF THE CHURCH: HIS OFFICE.

BY THE REV. J. H. STAPLETON.

"Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner-stone, elect and precious; and he that shall believe in him, shall not be confounded."—I Peter, ii, 6.

SYNOPSIS.—Exordium.—Chief corner-stone of the Church, invisible and visible, blessed and reprobated by men. Functions of the visible head stated. 1. *To affirm a Church without a visible head, is naturally absurd.* 2. *It is socially disastrous.* 3. *It is scripturally false. Objections refuted. Conclusion.*

St. Paul, quoting from the same passage of the prophet Isaias, calls this corner-stone, which "shall be a sanctification to you," "a stumbling-stone and a rock of scandal; and whosoever believes in him, shall not be confounded." These words refer, of course, to the Messias; in the mouth of the prophet they foretold the Saviour, who built up the Church of God and entered Himself into the edifice, as the "chief corner-stone, elect and precious;" who established the Christian fold and became its invisible head, from whom it derives its undying life. But these same words may, indirectly and very properly, apply to him, who, upon Christ's withdrawing from among men, took His place in the Temple of God's Church, became His vicar and representative, the visible head of the Christian fold. The Pope is the visible "corner-stone, elect and precious," in whom if men believe, they shall not be confounded; but who, like Christ whom he represents before men, is become a stumbling-stone and a rock of scandal for many who believe not in him.

We have but to reflect for a moment and consider how necessary for the propagation and preservation of the true faith in the world throughout the ages, as well as for our own individual act of faith, is the authority vested in his sacred office and person—governing and teaching with that collective wisdom infinitely superior, even independently of divine assistance, to the wisdom of the individual: to understand why this corner-stone is truly "elect and precious," and a security against confusion here and hereafter. While, on the other

hand, knowing the evil eye with which men outside the Church look upon him, sensing all the malignity and hatred that lies behind the epithets of "papist" and "romanist," so often hurled at us who believe and are not confounded; realizing that the question of spiritual supremacy involved in this dignity, apparently or in reality, keeps thousands and millions out of the fold: we will not fail to discover here "the stumbling-stone, the rock of scandal, the sign set for the ruin of many in Israel, which shall be contradicted." We bless our supreme pastor, because by the power given to him, we, the sheep, are fed with a wholesome spiritual food; they stone him because he blasphemes and makes himself the Vicar of Christ. It is worthy and just that the Vicar should be treated like the Master, should imitate Him in all things: be a subject for consolation and an object of contradiction, according as men see the light which he represents and reflects. Happy we who are not scandalized in him!

Men hear Christ's proclamation of supremacy: "all power is given to me in heaven and on earth," and are not offended thereby. Twenty centuries of Christianity have held up before their eyes the image of the Word made flesh, of whom it is written: "And he hath on his garment and on his thigh written: King of kings, and Lord of lords;" and His title to dominion is still honored by the bulk of humanity in civilized parts. But what of His work! He founded a Church to carry on perpetually His mission of redemption: well and good. But let this Man-God, while reserving for Himself the office of invisible and divine ruling from His throne in the heavens, choose and set up in His stead on earth, to teach and govern, a human agent, in immediate touch with humanity through human channels, whose authority communicated from above, is binding on the soul and conscience of those over whom he is placed; let Him give a head to the corporate religious body He created, a chief magistrate to the religious society He formed, a perpetual Peter to the Church He founded; let Him give a form to His organization in keeping with human ideas; let Him hand over to a mere mortal the keys of the kingdom, and commission him to rule and teach under the unerring guidance of the unseen Spirit and at once the world is in rebellion. This is what offends and scandalizes, and appears to them unworthy of a God. That He should lower Himself to work for us, is nothing; that He should raise up a creature to a lofty pinnacle of dignity to continue His work, is preposterous, and they will not hear it. The divine Architect plans and executes with infinite wis-

dom; and puny man finds flaws in His scheme. "We will have no man to lead us," they say, "we will brook no human authority, no visible supremacy; this is not as it should be. Let the Invisible One lead us, and Him alone. Not seeing Him, nor hearing Him, if we are weak and ignorant, we shall err; if evil, we may follow as we please or not follow Him: our wandering shall thus find justification. Away with your Pope! We will have none of him!"

This is the state of the question. How shall we vindicate the wisdom of God! How shall we justify the economy of His building the Christian temple and show forth the reason and necessity of the office of a visible corner-stone.

Might we not just as well try to show the necessity of a head to the human body? A body without a head! Nature offers nothing like it. Let the body be human, politic, social, religious: in the collection of units that go to make up the whole, in the various members that compose it, there must be order, unity, harmony, solidity; and there can be none, as there can be no justification for calling such an aggregation of parts a moral whole or entity, without co-ordination of such parts, one principal unit or part emerging as the head or chief. It is a law of nature, based on accidental inequalities and diversity of tastes and aptitudes, that where many are gathered together, one takes the leadership, all follow the lead of one best fitted to direct. The flock, the herd, yields to this law of nature. Where will you find a fold without a shepherd, an army without a captain, a navy without an admiral, a ship-crew without a captain, a state without a chief magistrate? The very school boy becomes a leader of his companions. Even criminals obey this law.

Now the Church is a body, a moral body, a body religious, a body militant, a complete and perfect organism, intended by the Founder, Jesus Christ, to make for harmony, effectiveness and perpetuity among men. The same God is the author of nature. The instinct for order found in every collection of individual creatures must be Godgiven. This instinct fits all things in their respective places, subordinates some to others for the greater good of all, establishes precedence culminating in a highest rank of honor and authority. This is wisdom, the divine wisdom which men admire in God's works. If God shows this wisdom in all things of nature, how is it conceivable that He left it out of the greatest work of all, the organization created for the salvation of men and the profiting by the Blood of the Lamb! And why should not this work of God be

according to the law of nature! Is there any creature on earth more natural than man? And man is the material of which the Church is made up. He can not follow in his religious life a law not in keeping with his nature. God can elevate man above nature, but He can not, without contradiction and destruction, treat him without regard for, and against, the order according to which he is made. Here as elsewhere nature demands a head; order requires it. To affirm a Church made up of men without a human visible head, is unnatural, monstrous.

Napoleon is credited with saying that, if the papacy did not exist, it would be necessary to invent it. It may safely be taken for granted that neither faith nor piety prompted this utterance. It was simply that, with his profound knowledge of men and his common sense, acute to the point of genius, he saw for the spiritual world, in the absence of a head to rule and teach, spiritual anarchy and the destruction of the religious idea among civilized peoples—results than which nothing more appalling for the human race can be imagined. Now, what is anarchy? Anarchy is a proposed disintegration of society in which it is imagined that social order can exist without government, authority, law, supremacy. It is exemplified in the periodical killing off of heads of governments, without regard to the individual who happens to be seated in the chair of authority, but on the sole principle that no one has the right to rule or command. It means, of course, wherever this monster trails its slimy lengths, confusion, destruction, ruin, chaos. It is the mortal enemy of civil government and society; for society can not be conceived without a head.

It is strange how men, who are shocked at the very idea of anarchy in reference to civil and social matters, demur not in accepting it in the spiritual and religious realm. Yet how obvious is it! If one who advocates the absence of formal government in things religious, regards it as essentially tyrannical, would destroy it, and thus bring about an unregulated and chaotic condition in the domain of religion: if such a one is not a religious anarchist, then the word has no meaning. If Christianity is a society organized by Christ, whose members are held together by belief in His teachings, then a principle which breaks this bond of belief is anarchical. Now, away from unity with the visible head of the Church, the teachings of Christ—essential and fundamental truths—are fast fading from men's minds. The germ of revolt against religious authority is

bearing fruit. It is a fact as clear as the noon-day sun that the rockbed truths of Christianity—the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, vicarious atonement, hell, original sin, etc., are no longer in honor with the majority of non-Catholics in our country.

It was fatal, this condition had to come. Authority and law was denied; disorder crept in. The keystone of the edifice was removed; the edifice collapsed. The tie that bound the members together was snapped asunder; warring sects arose, each straining in its own way; one affirming, another denying; all free-lances, all individualists with a theory. In rejecting the visible head of the Church, they rejected the principle of authority and supremacy in religious order. Thus was religious anarchy begotten. Like causes produce like results. What is a law of death for civil society, can not fail to be a law of death for the religious and spiritual. Just as a body can not exist without a head, neither can a society exist without a center of unity and authority. Take any aggregation of men, bent on any purpose whatsoever, and it will be a mere mob, will accomplish nothing but ruin, if there be no one to command and lead. Why? Because no unity exists: hence confusion and disorder.

Now God, who is the author of society, is the source and fountain-head of order. In His Church, therefore, order and harmony must obtain; and this can be only under conditions which secure order and harmony in all societies. His Church was intended to accomplish something. If no civil society can accomplish anything without government, how can a religious? It was intended to last as long as man. But anarchy is destruction. In the Church as well as in the State God's wisdom must show itself. And there is no wisdom in founding a Church and placing therein the seeds of death.

But we have the word of One more competent than Napoleon to speak on the necessity of a Supreme Pastor over the flock of Christ. It is the Word of Christ who founded the Church, who is its invisible head, who had His idea as to the fitness of things, and whose wisdom counts for more than ours. With His word before us, we shall see that, not only is it naturally absurd and socially disastrous, but it is scripturally false, that Christ established a Church without the office of a visible head.

Behold the group of Apostles He has called to Him, the first Christian society, learning at His feet the laws of the kingdom He is about to found. There is but one head; it is He. But He is not to remain

with them forever visibly to rule and teach. The Cross of Calvary beckons to Him, and He must go to buy the price of salvation for men's souls. This done, His Church will continue His mission among men, will apply the fruits of His passion, perpetuate His work. He sends and commissions them, He promises to be with them ever. And now, behold He singles out one from among them. No doubt as to who he is; He names him. To make the choice and election more solemn and impressive and in accordance with the Eastern custom of royalty, He changes his name. "Simon, son of John, thou art no longer Simon. Thou art Peter. Peter is henceforth thy name." He exacts of him a triple confession of love for Him greater than that of all the others; as if to show how, as being singular in affection, so he is to be made singular in authority and honor.

"Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. . . . And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose upon earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven. . . . Feed my lambs, feed my sheep."

Peter is a rock. A rock is the basis and foundation of an edifice, without which it can not subsist. It is the center of unity, without which we have but a mass of raw material. It is the principle of solidity, without which it can not endure. This is the function of a visible head: to be the center of unity, harmony, peace, by direction, command, and teaching. Here is a head appointed by divine authority. If we want a divine church, and not a church according to the vagaries of human fancy, here it is.

Peter has the keys. Keys are the emblem of supreme authority in the realm, a symbol recognized among all peoples. To the victor of old were given the keys of the city to signify that to him was turned over the power to rule. To Peter were confided the keys of the kingdom of heaven; to him was given power to be exercised on earth, and recognized in heaven—power to bind and loose, by laws and teachings. Could anything be clearer?

Peter is made the shepherd over all, over lambs and sheep, over great and small, high and low, subjects and subordinates, rulers and teachers. Shepherds are supreme rulers over their flocks. Rulers and kings, especially in the East, are called shepherds. The idea is luminous and pregnant with meaning. The prophet Ezechiel thus

announced in vision the Messias: "I will set up one shepherd over them: and he shall feed them, even my servant David: he shall feed them and he shall be their shepherd." 'Twas Christ the prophet saw, the founder of the Christian fold and its divine shepherd, its invisible head. The Father set Him up; the Father sent Him. As the Father sent Him, so He sent others, with all the "power that had been given to him in heaven and in earth," as He Himself says. And notice how He sends Peter and sets him up with the identical words which the Father established and sent Him. Peter is the one shepherd set up over all, even over the high ones like David. He shall feed them and be their shepherd: "feed my lambs, feed my sheep."

Christ's place Peter takes, by divine appointment, over all, to rule and teach even as He had done, to be His Vicar.

"But," some one will say, "the visible head, necessary at the beginning, is not necessary now." And why not now! There is no indication, in Scripture or elsewhere, that the essential organization of the Church was to change. It was established by a wise God for human beings for all time. It is but ordinary respect for God to say that it was established according to the needs of men. And human nature does not change in its essential aspects. There is no sign whereby we may know when and where, and how men have undergone such a transformation as to necessitate a reorganization of the Church. There is even more need now than there was then. Men have less faith and less charity. They are farther away from the sources of revelation, and are therefore less respectful. Secondary teachers are more numerous, less carefully chosen and prepared, by men; whereas then they were few, elected and taught by Christ, who is God. The faithful are spread over the whole world; nations have sprung up and divided peoples. Hence never greater danger of dissension and disunion. Hence now formal government to preserve the unity and purity of faith is more imperiously demanded.

If others say that the time for a change in the economy of church government came when the Church fell away; we answer that this is equivalent to saying that the Word of Christ has failed. He knew the temptations of men and foresaw their liability to err and to abuse the tremendous power thus conferred. For that reason He provided a safeguard: "I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." Reconcile this promise with the falling away of Christ's Church. Either His word is true and He is with the

Church, true to His promise; or not. If so, how could the Spouse of Christ prove faithless to her Redeemer!

Again: "Is it right that a mere man should hold the place of God over his fellows?" Is it right that any man should hold a position of authority over others in any sphere? If in temporals, why not in spirituals? Worldly rulers are God's lieutenants. Parents are God's vicars. In His sight we are all children and subjects. Why not delegate His authority in one domain as well as in another! And if He has done so in spiritual matters—as He has—why demand reasons of the fact of Him who is all wise? If God did confer supreme power on Peter and his successors, as we know from Holy Writ that He did, that ought to be enough for any one who believes in an infinite God.

The Catholic Church has such a leader, as nature, reason, and revelation demand that it should have; has had such a leader since the moment Christ relinquished His place and left Peter in His stead. For over nineteen centuries holy men have followed each other in that office of visible supremacy in unbroken succession and handed down the scepter that Peter in the beginning received from Christ. In that office, whose present incumbent is the wise and kindly Pius the Tenth, Catholic unity is centered, order is assured, Christ's word is verified. He is a head, not a figure-head. He not only presides, but he rules as well. He teaches, but with a voice as of one having authority. He commands not only respect, but obedience. His is a primacy of jurisdiction, as well as of honor.

Ours therefore the duty of thanking a wise God for the manner of His dealing with men, and for the faith by which we believe in Christ, the chief corner-stone divine, and in His representative and Vicar, the visible head of the Church; "for, he that shall believe in him, shall not be confounded."

XXIX. INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH AND OF THE POPE.

BY THE REV. H. G. HUGHES.

"In the days of those kingdoms, the God of Heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed; and His kingdom shall not be delivered up to another people; and it shall break in pieces, and it shall consume all these kingdoms; and itself shall stand forever."—Daniel ii, 44.

"And Jesus answering said: Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven: And I say to thee that thou art Peter; and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."—Matt. xvi, 17, 18.

SYNOPSIS—I. The dream of Nabuchodonosor, and its interpretation. The kingdom of God on earth. The beginnings of the kingdom. St. John the Baptist. The call and promise to Simon. Progress of the work. A visible kingdom, in the world though not of the world. A universal kingdom—teach all nations. A kingdom to last for all time.

II. The Petrine Privileges. The confession of Peter and its reward. Words of tremendous import. What do they mean? Peter the Rock. Peter the bearer of the keys. His work to last "all days even to the consummation of the world." A question—Would God give these powers, and not also give protection from error in their use?

III. The doctrine in Christian antiquity. St. Clement. The Council of Chalcedon. Is it an usurpation? If so, why no protest? But the Fathers are unanimous as to the principle.

IV. Infallibility of Church and Pope bound up together. Object of the Church—the salvation of souls. For this is necessary the inerrant teaching of truth. Church's inerrancy involves (a) inerrancy in teaching, (b) inerrancy in believing. How would a humanly instituted society ensure unity? By having an authoritative head. Our Lord has chosen the same way. Reason and revelation are in agreement here. The infallibility of the Pope is the only way of securing and accounting for the unity of the Church.

I. In the second year of his reign, Nabuchodonosor, ruler of the mighty empire of Babylon, dreamed a dream. Waking from sleep, his spirit was terrified, and his dream went out of his mind. He called around him his wise men, his magicians, and his astrologers, and demanded of them what had been his dream, and what was the interpretation of it. They being unable to comply with this command, the king, in his wrath, ordered that all the wise men of Babylon should be put to death. Now among them were counted, at this time, the holy prophet Daniel, and his three companions, Ananias,

Azarias, and Misael, who had been brought with the rest of their nation into captivity. Daniel, hearing of the cruel sentence of death thus passed upon himself and his companions together with the heathen soothsayers and magicians, hastened to the king's court, and promised that, if time were given him to pray to the God of heaven, he would declare both the king's dream, and the interpretation of it.

That night, accordingly, he prayed to God, who revealed to him in a vision the king's dream and its signification. And the king's dream was this: He saw, and behold there was a great statue, tall of stature, and with a terrible look. And the head of the statue was of fine gold; the breast and arms of silver; the belly and thighs of brass; and the feet part of iron, and part of clay. And the king looked till a stone was cut out of a mountain without hands; and it struck the statue upon the feet thereof that were of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of a summer's thrashing-floor, and they were carried away by the wind, and there was no place found for them; but the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

Now the great statue, dear brethren, represented the great empires of the world that were to follow one another. The head of gold represented the empire of Nabuchodonosor himself; the breast and arms of silver represented the empire of the Medes and Persians; upon this there was to follow the Macedonian empire of Alexander the Great; while finally, represented by the feet, part of iron and part of clay, was to come the world-wide empire of Rome. And when this last great empire was at its height should come the stone, cut out of a mountain without hands, rolling without any visible mover, small, indeed, at first, but afterward filling the whole earth. It was to strike the statue on the feet; that is it should come into conflict with, and should break in pieces the Roman Empire, at its center, and thereby shatter the kingdoms of the world, dependent upon Rome, and should become a world-wide power, filling the whole earth, for, said the Prophet: "In the days of those kingdoms the God of Heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, and his kingdom shall not be delivered up to another people, and it shall break in pieces and shall consume all those kingdoms, and itself shall stand forever" (Dan. ii, 44).

Nearly six hundred years after this, dear brethren, when the last of those great empires was at the summit of its power and prosperity,

a man suddenly appeared on the banks of the Jordan in the Roman province of Palestine. He was a striking and remarkable figure, recalling to the minds of those who saw him, the prophets of old. He was clothed in a rough garment of camel's hair; he lived a life of austere penance, subsisting upon locusts and wild honey. His preaching accorded with his life, for the burden of it was: "Do penance for the kingdom of God is at hand."

Yes, dear brethren, the kingdom of God was then at hand, the King Himself was come, the stone hewn without hands from the mountain was about to strike the feet of the great statue, to come into opposition with the world-wide power of Rome, which it was to break in pieces.

Soon after, this same preacher, in whom you will have recognized St. John the Baptist, was exercising his office and baptizing in the waters of the Jordan, when, looking up, he saw One coming toward him. Inspired by the Holy Spirit of God, he points to the new comer and cries out: "Behold the Lamb of God; Behold, here is he who taketh away the sins of the world! This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a Man who is preferred before me, because he was before me."

And henceforth the Forerunner *decreases,* while He to whom he has borne witness, who is none other than the King of the new kingdom, Jesus Christ our Saviour, *increases.* "And the next day again John stood, and two of his disciples; and beholding Jesus walking, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God. And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. And Jesus turning and seeing them following him saith to them: What seek you? Who said to him Rabbi—Master—where dwellest thou? He saith to them, come and see. . . . And Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was one of the two who had heard of John, and followed him. He findeth first his brother Simon, and saith to him; we have found the Messias. . . . and he brought him to Jesus. *And Jesus, looking upon him said. Thou art Simon, the Son of Jona,* thou shalt be called Kephas—Peter" (John i, 35-42). The work is begun, the new kingdom, the kingdom of God is now inaugurated, and the first thing that the Founder of the kingdom does is to choose the Rock upon which that kingdom is to rest as its solid and sure foundation. "Thou art Simon; thou shalt be called in the future Peter—the Rock."

Time goes on. The Divine Lord of the kingdom pushes on the

work. He calls around him Apostles and disciples. He preaches and sends them to preach, confirming His heavenly mission by great signs and wonders. Everywhere the burden of their preaching is the same; it is the announcement of the Forerunner repeated, "Do Penance; for the kingdom, the kingdom of heaven, God's own kingdom upon earth is at hand." Note, too, dear brethren, the character of this kingdom, as we have it described in the Gospels. It is no invisible kingdom, whose members are known to God only. No: the Founder Himself declares that it is like a city set on a hill like one of those towns of which, while He spoke, his hearers could see more than one, perched on rocky eminences—standing out in the clear atmosphere of that southern clime—impossible to be hid. It is not a kingdom in heaven; for He tells us also that it will number among its members both good and bad, as a net cast into the sea brings up good and bad fish. Moreover, He compares it to a field, in which good wheat was sown, and an enemy came in the night and sowed bad seed; and both are to grow together till the harvest, which is the end of the world; when the reapers, who are God's holy angels, will separate the bad from the good. It is a kingdom, then, *in* the world, but not *of* the world.

Again, it is to be a *universal* kingdom; for the Founder says to His Apostles—"Go ye into the *whole world,* and 'teach all nations.'"

It is to be a united kingdom, not a kingdom divided against itself. "A house divided against itself can not stand," and Jesus, in the last days of His earthly life prays for His followers that they may be one, with so complete and perfect a unity, that He does not hesitate to compare it with the unity that exists between His Father and Himself—"that they may be one, even as thou, Father, and I are one" (St. John xvii, 21).

Moreover, the kingdom of God upon earth is to last as long as time itself; for to those who are commissioned to spread it He says, "Lo, I am with you all days, even unto the consummation of the world" (Matt. xxviii, 20).

II. But let us go on a little further in the history of the beginnings of the kingdom. On a certain day, the Divine Master is at Caesarea Philippi. It is not long before His work is to end, apparently in complete failure, and He himself to be put to a most cruel and shameful death. He asks of His Apostles a question: "Whom do men say that the Son of Man is?" And they reply, "Some John the Baptist, and others Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the pro-

phets." Jesus saith to them: "But whom do *you* say that I am?" Then speaks Peter—the Rock—to whom the promise "thou shalt be called Peter," had been made. Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou are the Christ; the Son of the living God." Oh, blessed and happy confession of faith! Oh, great reward conferred upon him who made it! "Jesus answering, said to him: Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven" (Matt. xvi, 14-19).

Dear brethren, it must surely appear to the most careless reader of the Gospels, that we have here words of most tremendous import. Of tremendous import because they confer, in the plainest, most obvious terms, powers of vast extent, over the things of the other world, upon a mere man. Of tremendous import, also, in that by the very greatness of the reward we are taught the true value of that confession of faith: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." It was a confession of the Divine Sonship, as well as of the Messianic office of the Master.

But let us see what is given to Peter by those words, remembering that they are the words of God; and that when God speaks, it is not as when man speaks. When God speaks, every word is pregnant with deep meaning; yes, and, moreover, the words of God are effective: they operate and bring to pass that which they enunciate. What, then, is granted to St. Peter? Four things. And note that of these four things, only the last, the power of binding and loosing, was promised by Jesus Christ to the other Apostles in common with Peter (cf. Matt. xviii, 18).

First, then, Peter is to be the Rock—the sure foundation upon which the Church of God is to stand secure and firm. Secondly, because of this foundation no assaults of hell shall ever prevail against that Church. By the "gates" of a place its power, its strength is signified. We have, indeed, in modern times a surviving instance of this ancient usage, when we speak of the Ottoman Porte—or "gate," meaning by that expression the Ottoman Empire. It is a formal phrase which conveys the idea of the power and dignity of the state.

Thirdly, the keys of the kingdom that Christ has come to found

shall be given to Peter; and lastly, by virtue of this power of the keys, whatsoever he shall bind or loose upon earth shall likewise be equally bound or loosed in heaven.

Peter, in other words, is to be the foundation of the Church *for all time;* not only solid in himself, but giving solidity and permanence to the whole building. "For all time," I say; and this is plain from the very idea of a foundation. Who ever heard or spoke of a temporary foundation? A temporary door, a temporary roof there may be to a building—but a temporary foundation would be an absurdity. If the foundation be temporary, the whole building must needs be temporary, and will have to come down to be built up afresh on its new foundation. But Christ's Church is a permanent edifice—the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. Like the house in Our Lord's own parable, being built upon a rock, it will stand firm, though the rain beat, and the winds blow, and the sea rage against it. To suppose that only for his own life time was Peter to be the foundation of the Church; to hold that the foundation would ever be removed while the world should last, would be to suppose that Our Lord's work was not to last beyond the years of Peter, would be to go against the clear significance of the whole symbolism here used by Our Lord; would be to reduce to an empty boast of permanence never in fact to be realized, and to take all the meaning out of one of the most solemn declarations of Jesus that the Gospels contain.

Peter is to hold the keys. This, in nearly every civilized time and country, has ever signified the possession of supreme command. What Peter binds and looses on earth; what he commands or forbids, all his acts of authority, his decisions, his rulings, his government in general, are to be ratified and confirmed by God. "The Jewish way of using the words binding and loosing for 'to prohibit' and 'to permit,'" honestly admits the Protestant Dean Alford, "would make the binding and loosing belong to the *power of legislation* in the Church" (Greek Testament, abridged ed., in loco).

Dear brethren, let me put you here a question, to which we shall return again shortly. Do you think that Almighty God would give such powers as this to any man; would bind Himself to confirm all that man's official acts, and yet *so leave that man without Divine guidance that he might go astray and make mistakes in the exercise of his office?* Would not God, by so acting, be engaging Himself

to the ratification of error? You must answer—assuredly He would. But *that* God can not do.

Therefore we Catholics hold and say that God does NOT leave the Head of His Church without divine guidance in his official acts—his *official acts,* notice that—not in unofficial and private acts. We say that God does guide the Head of the Church in his official public acts; guides him by His Holy Spirit, so that in the exercise of his tremendous office, he is preserved from error—and that is what we mean when we speak of Papal Infallibility.

"What do you mean," we ask our children in the catechism, "when you say that the Pope is infallible?" And they reply: "When I say that the Pope is infallible, I mean that the Pope can not err, when, as Shepherd and Teacher of all Christians, he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals, to be held by the whole Church."

III. We have now considered, my dear brethren, in a general way, the position of St. Peter as the permanent foundation of the Church Catholic. We have seen that the very idea of that position—the position of a solid and perpetual foundation—necessarily involves the consequence that St. Peter must have, and must have continuously, successors in his office; successors in the persons of whom he will continue to be the Rock upon which the Church is built. Now if we interrogate Christian antiquity as to this matter, we shall receive a clear and decided answer. The successors of Peter, the holders of Peter's prerogatives and of Peter's powers, those in whose persons his office and work and position as the foundation are continued, are none other than his successors in the See of Rome. Thirty years after the death of St. Peter, a dissension arose in the Church at Corinth, and although one of the Apostles, St. John, was still alive, we find the Bishop of Rome, St. Clement, intervening to restore peace. He writes an epistle to the Corinthians: he speaks with an unmistakable tone of authority. "Do you," he writes, "who laid the first foundation of this sedition, submit yourselves unto your priests; and be instructed unto repentance, bending the knees of your hearts. . . . *but if some should be disobedient unto the things spoken from Him* (*i. e. Jesus Christ*) *through us,* let them know that they shall entangle themselves in no small transgression and danger" (S. Clement, 1st Ep. to the Corinthians. Ch. 57 and 59).

It would take long to go through the list of the Bishops of Rome, and to show how they were consistently regarded by the whole Christian world as successors of St. Peter in all his power and preroga-

tives; so let us come to the year 451. St. Leo the Great then occupied the Throne of the Fisherman. The Church had long been troubled by the heresy of Eutyches, who denied that there are two distinct natures in Jesus Christ, each with its own proper operations. A general council of the whole Church was called together, and six hundred Catholic Bishops met at Chalcedon.

Who presided over this august assembly? Was it the oldest and most venerable of the Bishops there present? No. Four strangers are there from distant Rome, bearing a letter from Pope Leo. In this letter the Pope tells the assembled Fathers that he has sent two Bishops and two Priests to represent him; and that they are to understand that he himself, through his legates, is presiding at this council. Moreover, he tells them that there is no cause for them to discuss or dispute as to what is the faith of the Catholic Church concerning the matter in hand, since he himself has already spoken and judged the cause, and the decision will presently be read to them by the legates. It was read; and that venerable assembly listened with all reverence to the Pope's definition of the true doctrine of the Incarnation, and, at its close, all cried out as with one voice: *"This is the faith of the Fathers." "This is the faith of the Apostles." "Peter hath spoken by the mouth of Leo."*

Dear brethren, I might multiply instances of similar occurrences. Are we to say that they were due to innovation, to the pride and arrogance of the Bishops of Rome seeking to dominate over their brethren? If so, let some one show when such usurpation of authority began; let it be shown when and where the inevitable opposition that such usurpation would meet with on every side was aroused. But this can not be done. There are, it is true, instances of resistance to this or that act of particular Popes, grounded upon the fact of the supposition that they were either misinformed or acting outside their province in such particular instances; but to the principle that the Bishop of Rome is the successor of Peter, that he is supreme head on earth of the Church of Christ, and that he is inerrant in his official teaching—to this there is no opposition except from those who had already made shipwreck of the faith in some other point of doctrine, and who were cast out of the Church Catholic in consequence of their obstinacy in error. Had the position of the Popes been an unjust aggression on the rights of Catholic Bishops, it would have been *they,* not interested heretics, who would have spoken out in the cause of truth and justice. But when they

spoke, it was to the same effect as the Fathers of Chalcedon. St. Irenaeus, Tertullian, St. Cyprian, St. Ambrose, with his famous saying *"Where Peter is, there is the Church;"* St. Augustine, St. Jerome; all these and many others, men who would have been the first to protest against an unjust assumption of spiritual power, speak of the Roman Church and of its Bishops in terms that convey no other teaching than that of the Vatican Council in our own times.

IV. And indeed, dear brethren, it is not difficult to show that the infallibility of the Pope is what we may call, when we have once granted that Jesus Christ established a visible Church and gave it a visible Head upon earth, a natural consequence of these two facts.

What is the Church for? I ask you. Is it not for the salvation of souls? And how are souls to be saved? They are to be saved by loving and serving Almighty God. But none can love and serve God who knows not God, who knows not his own relations to God, and God's will in regard to that service which His creatures owe to Him. Man, then, needs a teacher who will tell him the truth about God, about his own soul, and about the service which God demands of him. This is the office of the Church established by Jesus Christ. With her He promised to be "all days, even to the end of the world." To her He promised the gift of the Holy Spirit, to lead her into all truth (John xiv, 16-26). She is, St. Paul tells us, "the pillar and ground of the truth." To her, the true faith, the right doctrine concerning the all important matters of which I have just spoken—God, our souls, God's service—are a matter of life and death. Her own action through the ages from the times of the New Testament itself, show that she has never had any doubt of her right and her duty to suppress error at its first uprising. But, I ask you, with what right could the Church do this if it were possible for her to err in matters of faith? She would have no right. But that right she claims, and that right she has. The promises of God are not made void. She is commissioned to teach all nations, and she does it in perfect confidence with serene trust in the Word of her Master: "Lo, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world."

The Church, then, by virtue of the very work which she has to accomplish, enjoys that inerrancy in teaching, without which her work would be completely prostrated. But let us ask what such inerrancy involves. To be real and effective, to be anything more than a name, it must involve two kinds of inerrancy or infallibility. The Church consists of two classes of members—the teachers and the

taught. This must be so, in the nature of things. "Go ye, and teach all nations," said our blessed Lord. There must be those who teach, and there must be those who are taught. And, in order that Our Lord's promise "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" may be fulfilled, not only must the teachers be free from error in their teaching, but the taught must be preserved from error in their belief. There are, then, two kinds of inerrancy or infallibility—the *active* infallibility, as we may term it, of the teachers, and the *passive* infallibility of the belief of the faithful at large. This latter does not mean that individuals, and many individuals, can not fall into error; but it means that the Church as a whole will ever be preserved from a general and universal apostacy from the truth. For this it is necessary that teachers and taught, the pastors and the faithful at large, be bound together in their faith by some universal force which shall secure that correspondence in faith throughout the whole body without which the Church would not be a united body at all, without which she would fall to pieces, without which she would most certainly fall a prey to the powers of hell who are ever seeking to instill falsity into the minds of men for their destruction.

Now what is this universal, unifying force that keeps together—this, my brethren, is a living, palpable fact—keeps together, I say, so many millions of Christians to-day in one heart and one mind upon the highly debateable subjects with which religion is concerned? Consider the matter, for a moment, from the morally common-sense point of view. How does any society of men, instituted for some special purpose, ensure at least a large measure of unity of thought and action among its members in regard to the objects of the society, and the best means of attaining that object? It is, and it can only be, by some authoritative voice, whether of committee, or president, or of some similar organ of communication. And, I ask you, supposing the matters with which such a society deals are of such paramount importance, so nearly concerning the very life and death, the peace and happiness and security of the members of the society, that an absolute unity of idea is desirable, how could such unity be brought about? The members of a committee may differ. When the matters discussed admit of some compromise, then, indeed, an agreement may be arrived at in that way. But supposing that the affairs in question admit of no compromise. Then, indeed, there is but one way of securing complete unity. There must be a spokesman with an authoritative voice, whose decisions will com-

mand entire confidence and unquestioning obedience. In human affairs, such an authority, however wise and well-informed, will still be fallible. But, I ask you, could the Divine Founder of the Church, considering that the subject of the Church's teaching concerns not merely life and death, but everlasting salvation, could He, I say, have chosen a more fitting, a more natural way, and one better adapted to the nature and constitution of man, than the institution of a supreme head with infallible authority to put an end to all disputes and controversies by his utterances, a head who should voice the inerrant teaching of the body at large, whose decisions should keep in the unity of faith pastors as well as people, and secure effectively that unity in belief and obedience which we see, as a fact, is secured in the Holy Roman and Catholic Church?

Yes, dear brethren, this wonderful unity is a fact; and a fact that can be accounted for in one way only; namely, by postulating that God *has* chosen a center of unity for His Church, and that center of unity is the Holy See of Rome, whose occupant, as successor of St. Peter, carries on in his own person and office the work of the Foundation, the Rock—Peter—upon which Jesus Christ has built His Church. To Peter was given the command "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep" (Matt. xvi, 18, 19); to Peter it was said "Confirm thy brethren;" and, relying on those commands and upon the promise of Jesus Christ "I have prayed for *thee,* that thy faith fail not," the successors of Peter with inerrant voice feed the lambs and the sheep of Christ's flock with sound doctrine, and confirm their faith against the attacks of error at all times and in all places. What reason itself tells us would be the most effective method of preserving the truth throughout the centuries, revelation tells us was truly the means that Our Lord actually chose. Certainly, to look at the matter from another point of view, if Peter is the solid, unassailable Rock, giving stability to the whole building of Christ's Church, he, and his successors in whom he still lives and acts, must be preserved from all fear of error in their teaching of religion.

One final word, my dear brethren, as to the meaning and scope of this inerrancy or infallibility. The Vatican Council has in clear terms defined what is meant by Papal Infallibility. "We declare and define . . . that the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra,* that is, when, exercising his office as pastor and teacher of all Christians, by virtue of his supreme Apostolic authority he defines a doctrine concerning faith or morals as to be held by the whole Church,

then, by divine assistance, promised to him in the person of the Blessed Peter, he enjoys that same infallibility . . . with which the divine Redeemer willed His Church to be endowed."

Infallibility, then, is not the same thing as inspiration. It belongs to the Church and the Pope in virtue of a "divine assistance," guarding from error in the teaching and in the exposition of the body of truth once delivered to the saints. It does not apply to any and every act of Pope or Church; but to teaching concerning faith and morals; finally, it applies, according to the words of the sacred council, when a doctrine is taught as binding the universal Church—when the Pope is exercising his office as pastor and teacher of all Christians.

If people would only study the Church's own presentment of her own doctrines, instead of taking the caricatures of them so often put before the mind of man, they would find them to be much more reasonable than they had ever supposed. So it is with this doctrine of infallibility. It is not that tremendous assumption which it is often taken to be: it does not confer upon him whose prerogative it is, either sinlessness or freedom from liability to error in everything he may speak about, nor on every occasion on which he may speak. It is simply the power to do that which we should have expected Our Divine Lord to have provided for—to hand down from age to age, unsullied and pure, to expound correctly and interpret rightly the truth that makes us free, the truth upon which our salvation depends, and that we must drink, if we drink at all, from an unpolluted channel through which no poison of error can reach our immortal souls.

XXX. THE PRIESTHOOD: ITS THREEFOLD OFFICE.

BY THE REV. THOMAS J. GERRARD.

"Thou art a priest forever."—Hebrews v, 6.

SYNOPSIS.—Introduction.—The intrinsic fitness of a priesthood. Men of low degree in approaching men of high degree, like to have an intercessor. Natural, then, that men in approaching God should wish to have a priest. Christ in the Incarnation assumed the office of a priest. The priesthood of the Catholic Church is a participation of Christ's priesthood. To Christ then we must go to learn the nature of our priesthood.

Exposition.—I. Christ came to offer sacrifice. The end of sacrifice: union with God, and reconciliation. Christ, as a member of the human race, offers the great sacrifice. Continues it in heaven. Makes it visible on earth through the ministry of priests. Words of sacrifice pronounced in the name of Christ. Men chosen for priests in order that they may know the needs of men. Ordination confers a seal which can never be effaced. Gives jurisdiction over the natural Body of Christ.

II. Christ came to forgive sins. He would apply the fruits of His sacrifice. Throughout His ministry He exercised the power: the Paralytic, Magdalen, woman taken in adultery. Friend of sinners. Work continued in the Sacrament of Penance. Power to bind and loose; to forgive and to retain sins. Priest is (a) judge, (b) physician, (c) guide, (d) father.

III. Christ came to preach a revelation. Preached by deed and by word. Gave authority to the priests of the Church to preach. They preached in His name. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Their message therefore has the same weight as if He delivered it.

Difficulties answered.—Luther's denial of sacrificial priesthood: a denial of the great prophecy of Malachi; a denial of the eternal priesthood of Christ. The difficulty as to the power of man to forgive sins arises from the confusion of "primary" and "secondary" minister; and ignores the direct commission of Christ. The objection against authoritative and "apostolic" preaching ignores Scripture and the express words of Christ.

Never in the history of mankind, until the time of the Reformation, had there been known to be a religion without a priesthood. God had so made the human heart and soul that it sought for Him as for its supreme satisfaction. God was an unseen God. Man was a thing of flesh and blood. It was natural therefore that men should be chosen from among their fellowmen, who, being acquainted with the needs of mankind, might represent those needs before God. It was fitting that human beings who could talk to human beings in human language should be set aside to treat of things between God and men and to dispense God's gifts to men.

This inherent need of an intercessor is noticeable in all phases of life, where those of low degree must communicate with those of high degree. A child wants a present from its father, and it begs its mother to ask the father. A youth leaving school for business, although he may have confidence in his abilities, yet feels he has better chances if he has a friend to speak for him. Men may push their way into social, intellectual, artistic, or political circles, but they do so much more successfully if they are introduced by some recognized member. Naturally then when men wished to communicate with the mysterious world of the Great Spirit they did so by means of a chosen priesthood.

In course of time God saw fit to live among men Himself. He deigned to take upon Himself the form of man and as the God-man to dwell with men. Seeing that the human race had been accustomed to treat with Him through a priesthood, He arranged that He in His Incarnation should be clothed also with a priesthood. He had come to make a great atonement for sin. He had come to undo an infinite wrong. To this end a priest and a victim of infinite value were needed. So God made Himself the priest and the victim of the sacrifice.

The priesthood which we know in the Catholic Church to-day is derived from and is a participation in that priesthood of Christ. To understand therefore the nature of the Catholic priesthood we must ever recur to its exemplar, the priesthood of Christ. From that priesthood we learn of the threefold office: to offer sacrifice, to forgive sins, and to preach the revealed Word of God. The sublime truth which is realized in every Catholic priest to-day was first spoken of Christ Himself in the great Messianic psalm: "The Lord hath sworn and he will not repent: Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech."

The first office in the priesthood of Christ is to offer sacrifice. Theologians have differed as to what precisely constitutes a sacrifice. But all are agreed in this—that it is a rite by which men hold communion with God, by which God's supreme dominion over men is acknowledged, and by which those who have offended God are reconciled to Him. Now since all men had sinned in Adam there was imperative need of such a rite of reconciliation. Spiritual writers have speculated as to what might have happened if Adam had not sinned. Would there still have been place and necessity for sacrifice? Whatever be the answer to this question, certain it is that

after the sin there was even greater need of sacrifice. We have "therefore a great high priest, that hath passed into the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God."

The highpriest of the law entered into the holy of holies once a year to offer the blood of the sacrifice. Christ entered into the presence of His eternal Father to offer the sacrifice of His own Blood. The sacrifice of Christ, however, was not for Himself. True He was tempted in all things like as we are, yet without sin; and having no sin, He needed no expiation. To man, therefore, the value of Christ's sacrifice lay in the fact that He, together with the rest of men made up one family, the human race. The disorder of our relationships with Almighty God was to be dispelled and order restored through the whole race making atonement and satisfaction. Christ being a member of the race, gave to it this power. But the race, as a race, was bound to take its share in the sacrifice and priesthood of Christ. This it does by means of its visible priesthood. The eternal priesthood of Christ in heaven is made visible on earth through the ministry of the priests of the Catholic Church. The sacrifice which is offered on earthly altars is one and the same sacrifice as that offered on Calvary and continued in heaven. It is carried, as we pray in the Mass, by the hands of God's holy angel to God's altar on high in the sight of His Divine Majesty. "For every highpriest taken from among men is ordained for men in the things that appertain to God, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins."

Thus it is that when the priest offers the sacrifice he does not do so in his own name. For the time being he virtually puts off his own personality and puts on that of Christ. He pronounces the words of sacrifice, but they are not his own words. They are the words of Christ: "This is my body." "This is the chalice of my blood." The priest is Christ's ambassador and representative. As he speaks Christ's words, then Christ by an act of His will brings about that which the words signify.

This, then, is the first duty of a priest, to offer sacrifice, to say Mass. It is a tremendous dignity and responsibility. We might well wonder how God could confide such a work to mere men. The epistle to the Hebrews gives us the reason. Men are chosen simply because they are men. He who is to stand between God and men must know what it is to be a man. He must know by experience something of man's weakness and needs. The end of sacrifice is union with God, and only he who bends low can enter into that

communion. So every high priest taken from among men is one "who can have compassion on them that are ignorant and that err: because he himself is compassed with infirmity. And therefore he ought, as for the people, so also for himself, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins."

One of the most important ceremonies in the ordination service is that which signifies this power. It is called the tradition of the instruments. A chalice with wine and water, and a paten with a host are placed in the hands of the candidate while the Bishop says: "Receive power to offer sacrifice to God, to celebrate Masses both for the living and the dead." The Anglican church when it broke away from the Catholic Church abolished the rite of handing over the chalice and paten. And so when the question of the Anglican priesthood was tried in Rome, this wilful omission was declared to be a sign of change of intention. By doing away with the signs of sacrifice itself, the Anglican church declared its intention of doing away with the priesthood.

In contrast to this the Catholic Church teaches that by ordination the priest is configured to Christ. His soul is sealed. A mark is made on the powers of his soul which is light to his understanding and love in his affections. Just as a lawyer makes a deed legal by sealing it in wax, so God makes a priest, stamping him with a character. This sets him aside for his special duties. It entitles him to participate in precisely those functions of the priesthood which Christ came on earth to perform. The mark remains forever. It can never be effaced. It remains always either to the glory of the priest or to his shame.

> "For good ye are and bad, and like to coins,
> Some true, some light, but every one of you
> Stamped with the image of the King."
>
> TENNYSON.

Thus far we have considered what is known as the jurisdiction of the priest over Christ's natural body. Next we come to consider what is known as the jurisdiction of the priest over Christ's mystical body, his power to forgive sins. The sacrifice of Christ meant primarily the worship of God. But it implies also and in consequence remission of sin; for repentance from sin is an act of worship. Contrition is the return of a perverted will toward God. The relation of sin to the Incarnation is very intimate indeed. The Church

speaks of the sin of Adam as a fruitful and even needful fault, since it was the occasion of the coming of so good and so great a Redeemer. The sweetest name of the Redeemer is that which associates him with men as their sin-bearing-Jesus—God the Saviour. "Behold the lamb of God, behold him who beareth the sins of the world." Again Isaias foretold of Him: "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

This, then was the second great office of His priesthood, to apply the fruits of His sacrifice to our individual souls. By the great sacrifice the purchase value of our souls had been provided. There everything was ready for the satisfaction of eternal justice. But the merit had to be applied to each sinful soul. During Our Lord's life on earth, He exercised this power on many occasions. He healed the sick, and fed the hungry, and bestowed temporal gifts in abundance; but at the same time He used these events as opportunities of undoing sin. The paralytic came with his malady. Our Lord cured it; but at the same time He said: "Thy sins are forgiven thee." The Samaritan woman talked with Him by the well. He read her heart and accused her of her past life; but not without assuring her of the fountain of water springing up into life everlasting. He took the part of Magdalen against Simon and said of her: "Many sins are forgiven her because she hath loved much." To the sorrowing thief on the cross He said: "This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise." Likewise with the woman taken in adultery. Our Lord bent down and wrote the sins of her accusers in the dust. No one dared condemn her. "Neither will I condemn thee," said Our Lord, "go, and now sin no more." Indeed so constant and insistent was Our Lord in the exercise of His priestly office of absolving from sins, that He gained for Himself the title of friend of publicans and sinners. What was intended for a scoff was in reality a testimony to His mission. "They that are in health need not a physician, but they that are ill. . . . I am not come to call the just, but sinners."

It was only fitting then that Christ, when He left this earth, should invest His earthly priesthood with the same power of forgiving sins. Just as He had given them power over His natural body in the Blessed Sacrament, so now He gives them power over His mystical body, the Church. Their priesthood is the representation of His priesthood in heaven. If a brother were to offend against a brother, the injured one must try kind words. If this did not avail he must seek for arbitration before two or three witnesses.

Failing in this, he must have recourse to the Church. The Church is the continuation of Christ's work on earth. To His disciples He said: "Amen I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose upon earth it shall be loosed also in heaven."

The power of binding and loosing was more particularly defined by Our Lord shortly after His Resurrection. The disciples were gathered together in a room for fear of the Jews. Our Lord came and stood in the midst of them, showing them the marks of His glorified wounds. As He had been sent from the Father to take away the sins of the world, so they must be sent from Him to take away the sins of the world. They were to be filled with the Spirit of Christ so as to be able to act in the name and person of Christ. In signification of this Christ breathed on them and said to them: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain they are retained." In the rite of ordination therefore these words are repeated by the bishop as he lays his hands on the priest.

The power of binding and loosing makes the priest a judge of the penitent. He is, however, something much more. He is physician, guide and father. As a physician the priest diagnoses the moral disease. He seeks out the cause and provides a remedy against relapse.

As a guide the priest is the source of ecclesiastical and canonical information. All people are bound by the laws of their respective countries. But they can not all be expected to be experts in the knowledge of law. They must as occasion demands have recourse to recognized lawyers. Likewise all men are bound by the laws of God, whether those laws be natural, divine, or ecclesiastical. But all men can not be supposed to have an intimate knowledge of those laws. Therefore is it that the priest is equipped with this knowledge which may be sought from him in the confessional. "The lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth: because he is the angel of the Lord of hosts."

The perfection of the office of confessor is the character of fatherhood. As judge and physician the priest may have unpleasant duties to perform which of themselves make confession difficult. As guide he may have disagreeable information to give. But as father he is all charity. It is a happy development of Catholic custom in these days for all priests to be called "father." The late Cardinal Manning used to count it one of the greatest joys of his life when any one,

not recognizing his dignity, addressed him as "father." And so when he had occasion to write on the subject, he spoke as follows: "The title of father is the first, the chief, the highest, the most potent, the most persuasive, the most honorable of all the titles of a priest. He may receive from the world and from its fountains of honor many names, from the schools of learning many degrees, from the ecclesiastical law many dignities; but none has so deep and so high a sense as 'father,' and none but the spiritual fatherhood will pass into eternity."

Besides the offering of sacrifice and the remission of sins, Our Lord came to reveal the eternal and invisible God. This He did by His life and by His preaching. St. Luke, at the beginning of the Acts, tells us that Jesus first began to do and then to teach. Preaching by deed and by word was the means by which Christ drew men to penance and to sacrifice. Thus, in His Galilean ministry, speaking in the synagogue at Nazareth, He claimed this office as a fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaias. "The spirit of the Lord is upon me. Wherefore he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the contrite of heart, to preach deliverance to the captives, and sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of reward." And the people wondered at the words of grace that proceeded from His mouth. So, too, again, after His sermon on the mount, when He had ended His words, "the people were in admiration at his doctrine. For he was teaching them as one having power, and not as the Scribes and Pharisees."

Just before His Ascension, Christ gave this preaching power to His disciples. Moreover, He associated the preaching with the sacrifice and the remission of sins. "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise again from the dead the third day: And that penance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, unto all nations beginning at Jerusalem." The disciples are not sent on their own authority. They are but the instruments of Christ. Christ speaks first of His own supreme power. "All power is given to me in heaven and earth." Then, by virtue of that power, He gives His disciples their commission: "Going therefore, teach ye all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." The presence here spoken of was the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit

would guide them unto all truth. Their message therefore must have all the authority as if it were spoken from the lips of Christ Himself. "Go ye into the whole world and preach the Gospel to every creature." So imperative was the sanction of their authority, that Christ would make it more tolerable for Sodom than for the city that would refuse to receive them. "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me."

The most widespread objection against the priesthood is that which was started by Luther at the Reformation. Its main idea is a denial of the Catholic priesthood in the strict sense in which we have tried to explain it. The word "priest" was sometimes retained, but its true meaning was denied. The reformers rejected all idea of priesthood which implied the offering of sacrifice. If such a contention were true then we must believe that the great prophecy of Malachi has not been fulfilled: "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down, My Name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to My Name a clean oblation: for My Name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts." Neither would there be any meaning in the words of the Psalmist: "Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchisedech." The priesthood of Melchisedech was one that offered sacrifice in bread and wine. And in this sense the words are repeated by Our Lord Himself, as also by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews. The Eucharist was clearly a sacrificial rite. And if the Eucharist is a sacrifice, then the minister of it is a priest in the strict sense of the term.

The common objection against the priestly power of forgiving sins is invariably based on a misunderstanding of the Catholic doctrine. "How can a man forgive sins?" "God alone can forgive sins!" These are the expressions which we hear so frequently on the lips of our non-Catholic friends. The explanation is very simple. The Catholic Church does not teach that the priest is the chief minister in the Sacrament of Penance. He is only the secondary minister. He is but the mouthpiece of Christ. Whenever he pronounces the words of absolution he expressly refers them to the authority of Christ and the Blessed Trinity: *"By His authority* I absolve thee from all bond of excommunication and interdict in so far as I can and in so far as thou needest it. (Then) I absolve thee from thy sins *in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."*

The general objection against the exclusive right of preaching the Gospel is that put forward by the sects of nonconformists. The only juridical qualification for a minister or preacher seems to be that he must be able to get some one to listen to him. Rejecting the episcopal form of church government, they have recourse to a "call" from a body of worshipers. The minister so called is accepted by the neighboring ministers, a "recognition service" is held, and hands are laid on him. But there is no claim made of the rite being a Sacrament conferring grace; nor yet is there any pretence to the character of "once a minister always a minister."

Against this it is answered that from the very beginning of Christianity there has always been a sharp distinction between the Church which teaches and the Church which is taught. Thus, after Our Lord's Ascension, St. Peter called upon the Church to choose an Apostle in the place of Judas, "to take the place of this ministry and Apostleship, from which Judas hath by transgression fallen. . . . And they gave them lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven Apostles. It is written of St. Paul and St. Barnabas that when they went to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, "they ordained to them priests in every church." St. Paul in his letter to Timothy speaks expressly of the grace conferred by the laying on of hands. "Neglect not the grace that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the imposition of the hands of the priesthood." The passages of Scripture show that the Apostles who were sent to preach to the whole world were intended to pass on that power to their successors. It was not sufficient that the preacher should feel some mystical movement within himself; nor yet that he should have a following of people who agreed with him; but he must be approved and sent by the Church founded by Christ. "How shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they be sent?"

This, then, is the priesthood. To this sublime office men, not angels, have been called. In the exercise of this office the priest becomes another Christ, since like Christ he must offer sacrifice, the spotless sacrifice of Calvary; he must forgive sin by the power of Christ; he must teach the doctrine of Christ. Our people know this and hence in reverencing the priest they know and feel that they are honoring and reverencing Christ Himself, who in His love and mercy gave us His priesthood, and gives us the priest to be our Father, our guide, our friend. To this same Christ be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

XXXI. THE PROPAGATION AND PRESERVATION OF THE CHURCH.

BY THE REV. JOHN FREELAND.

SYNOPSIS.—I. The small beginnings of the Church of Christ. The death of Our Lord seemed to have rendered success quite hopeless.

II. The natural disadvantages from which the work would appear bound to collapse. (a) The Apostles were unlettered men. (b) Their adversaries in the Roman Empire were very learned and very cultured. (c) The Christian doctrine was opposed to the allurements and the pleasures of the world. (d) At no time as then have those very pleasures been regarded as offering the highest good.

III. The hostility of the Roman State. (a) The ten persecutions, in which every cruelty was practised against the faithful. (b) The gentleness of the Christians under this fierce opposition. (c) Nevertheless, it is the religion of the unlettered, the poor, and the gentle that triumphs.

IV. God not only gave life to the Church, but preserves that life. (a) Diseases to the health of the Church's life in the shape of schisms, and their disappearance. (b) The youth of the Church. Her great age. How she has seen the end of institutions of which she saw the commencement. (c) Her youth and great age maintained in spite of continual opposition.

V. In history she forms the one bright spot where darkness reigned. The blessings she brought to Europe, (a) learning, witnessed to by the universities, (b) brotherly love, by the guilds, (c) general civilization. Yet, during all this time she was being opposed by kings and nobles.

VI. In spite of everything she still lives and flourishes. (a) The unity among her ministers. (b) The enthusiasm among her members. (c) Scenes of piety to be witnessed among her laity alone. (d) The spirit of the early martyrs still exists.

VII. The divine hand that created her, has also preserved her.

Nothing could have well appeared more hopeless than the affairs of the religion of Christ on that first day of Pentecost when St. Peter arose in the city of Jerusalem to give utterance to his opening discourse. The Divine Founder had left it without His visible presence. The last of Him seen by the Jewish people was His crucifixion. He had died between two thieves, surrounded by a crowd in whom the hatred of the whole human race seemed to have become centralized. As He was borne away to the tomb which the kindly offices of Joseph of Arimathea had provided, it was thought, and with apparent reason, that the last had been heard of "that Prophet who had come into this world." He was dead; His followers had been dispersed; the beginnings of the new religious movement had been taken up by the roots; the thing had

come completely to an end. Thus it must have appeared to all. But men forgot, as men do forget, that, when affairs have the gloomiest outlook, then God most of all delights to show and to make manifest His power.

Almost every feature connected with the commencement of the Christian religion is of a miraculous kind. Twelve poor men, without culture, with very little knowledge as the world understands the term, speaking with an accent the despised dialect of Galilee, stood, on the first Pentecost day, before the inhabitants of Jerusalem to preach to them "Christ and Him crucified." For forty days previous to this they had been in concealment, afraid; now, suddenly, their fears are gone, they openly accuse those of whom they had but recently been in such terror of putting to death the Lord of Glory, and, calling on them to repent, they tell them that there is no other name under heaven by which men are to be saved except that of Him whom, but a few weeks before, they had crucified.

And the people who would not listen to the gentle pleadings of the Master now eagerly drink in every word of the accusations made by the disciple. They obey the call to penance to the number of five thousand and are baptized.

This was the beginning of the Catholic Church, so far as its active propagation is concerned. From that day, irresistibly, she went on increasing in extent. Before St. Paul had come to die he could say that the preacher of the Gospel had gone forth into the whole world; before a century had passed, a pagan writer, in mentioning the followers of Christ, could describe them as a vast multitude; and, before two hundred years had flown by after the sad event which took place on Mount Calvary, one Christian writer could assert that Christians were to be found over the whole world, while another could say that they filled the market places of Rome itself, occupying positions in the army, in the senate, even in the court of Caesar. Paganism had been left nothing but its temples.

Looked at from a natural point of view, Christianity had everything against it; and, regarded from the same standpoint, paganism, which after three centuries lay prostrate, defeated in its fierce struggle with the religion of Christ, had had all things capable of ensuring it victory. At no time have enlightenment and culture stood higher than they did under the Roman emperors. Civilization had reached its culminating degree. Art, even long before this period, had attained to an excellence which has hardly ever since been ap-

proached, not to say surpassed. The literature of ancient Rome, together with that of Greece, was of so perfect a nature that, across the ages down to our own times, Plato and Homer, Cicero and Virgil, as well as a host of others, have kept their place as examples of what polite literature in style and in beauty of expression ought to be.

What had the Apostles and the early Christians to offer in opposition to this learning with its finish of style and beauty of diction? Those first heralds of the Gospel and members of the Catholic Church had none of the wisdom of the world, and, as society reckons learning, no learning. St. Paul himself says that among the followers of Christ there were not many wise, not many learned, not many imbued with the knowledge of the philosophy of the days in which they lived. They had a doctrine to offer; but it was a doctrine which went directly against three-fourths of those things which are the dearest to human nature, and which even severely consured most of the habits which had the society of that day so firmly within their grasp. The process of breaking with such habits would be a very painful one. To an age in which self had been elevated to the rank of a God, the Christian and Catholic religion preached self-denial. To a people with whom every kind of pleasure had been made to appear not only delectable but commendable it is said that mortification and discomfort formed the better way. How could such a religion hope naturally to make progress? With their continual cry of "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand," with their "Do penance," with their "mortify the deeds of the flesh," how could the first exponents of our holy faith expect to make the Cross of Christ march forward, when the people to whom they said these things considered that only to be good which gave the greatest bodily pleasure, and that to be virtue which was vice, very often in its most degrading forms? Nevertheless, the victory remained with the Apostles. The poor teachers overcame the wise philosophers. The rugged and weary path of virtue became far more attractive to the multitude, than all the ease and the allurements offered by the broad road of vice. As one of the greatest Fathers of the Church has argued, either miracles, wrought by the power of Christ using the instrumentality of the ministers and members of the infant Church, are responsible for its wonderful progress, or that progress happened without a miracle; and if the latter alternative were the true one then the growth and the propagation of the religion of Christ are

stupendous miracles in themselves. They can not be explained unless by admitting that God was secretly and silently at work so as to ensure success. Never was an end, great, startling, contrary to every earthly expectation, so surely accomplished without the help of human means as this was. It was the triumph of the weak over the strong, of the small over the great, of the insignificant over the grand and the mighty. It was the miracle of the sheep rending to pieces the wolf, to use the comparison of Chrysostom.

The propagation of the faith would have borne all the marks of divinity even had it been hampered only by the disadvantages to which we have alluded; but what must strike the mind more than any other feature of this subject is, that the advance was made in the face of the cruelest opposition known in history. Paganism decreased and Christianity increased just then when every torment which human ingenuity could advise was used in the fiercest manner possible against the new faith. Ten persecutions swept over the Catholic Church, each one more violent than the last. The persecutors had determined that there should be an end to this "superstition" as they called the doctrine of Christ. For three centuries the prisons were never closed, the instruments of torture never idle, against the believer. The wild beast was fed upon his flesh; the cross sustained him as its most usual burden. Earth, air, fire, and water were hired without ceasing to afford the means by which, in the shape of a fearful death, adherents to the religion of Christ might be killed outright, and thus an end brought about to the detested Christian. Instead of this it was paganism that collapsed. Reddened with its own blood the Catholic Church only stood out grander and assumed larger proportions, and the persecution which was meant to retard its progress had the effect of making it start forward with leaps and bounds.

This strange event would, perhaps, lose something of its mystery had the members of the Church offered resistance to their tormentors, had they taken life for life, or had they answered persecution with some kind of persecution in return. Yet the very opposite feature in their conduct is what impresses us most. From St. Stephen down to the latest of the martyrs there is one continual prayer for their persecutors. When apprehended there is no attempt made to make reprisals. There is no wish displayed to sell their life dearly, as the expression goes. There is no ill will treasured up among the survivors of the community, leading any one of them to wreak vengeance

at the first opportunity on those who had cruelly put one of their brethren to death. These Christians were remarkable for a sweetness of disposition. They were, in so many cases, tortured while a hymn was upon their lips and a prayer was being formed upon their tongue; and, like their divine Master, they were really led like a lamb to the slaughter, and, as a sheep dumb before its shearers, they opened not their mouth.

By the use of such strange and apparently inadequate means did the Catholic Church finds herself in possession of the whole civilized world. It was as one of the prophets had foretold that it should be: "Not by armies, not by the host, but by my Spirit saith the Lord." A divine power was with the Church. God was on her side. He was true to His promises; and His promises had been that the gates of hell should not prevail against her; that the Spirit of truth should abide with her, that He would be with her always, and that she should be as a rock which breaks to pieces all it falls upon, while all that dashes upon it lies crushed and shattered, leaving the rock itself uninjured.

Little, however, would have been the advantage, had not the commencement and the propagation of the Church been a divine work, and the preservation and the continuance of it not equally divine. All forms of life have their particular dangers arising from within the system itself. From the commencement up to the end there is a perpetual contest between health, the great general of the forces of life, and disease, the chief over the battalions of death. The same thing meets us in the history of the Church. Nothing but a divine institution could have survived the many obstacles placed in her way by enemies who had, at one time, belonged to the number of her children. Very early in her career the spirit of contention, of divisions, and of schisms, as St. Paul calls them, made themselves evident, just like a sickness which will attack the opening life of a human being and often destroy it. Over each one of these she triumphed. Most of them were expelled, some of them voluntarily left her society, and, while she went on her way the stronger, because of their departure, they were brought to nought; just as the germs of a fever are sent out from the system and are destroyed. This phenomenon has been a continually repeating one in the history of the life of the Church. First came the contention among some of her members; then the self assertion of her own natural vitality and health in the shape of a general council, or of a pronouncement of

the Vicar of Christ; then the departure of the dissatisfied, the authors of false doctrine, and, finally, their complete disappearance, while she has gone on strong in the strength of Christ her spouse, vigorous and healthy with the truth which comes from the Holy Spirit dwelling within her.

She has been preserved, moreover, in a state of youth and energy, with no seeds of decay and with no signs of dissolution within or about her, although she is older than any institution existing. Few people consider the great age of the Catholic Church. She is not of yesterday. She did not commence, as some of the sects round about us, even at what is now considered the remote period of three hundred years ago. The twentieth century of the present era is also the twentieth century of the life of the Catholic Church. Through all that time she alone has stood immovable and unshaken by events which, with the greatest violence, have passed over the world. She has watched the beginnings of every state in Europe, in the same manner as one of advanced years may have witnessed the Baptism, the childhood, the manhood of a rising generation; but unlike such a one, whose death bed is attended by the children he has nursed, the Church of God has witnessed the decay of every power of which ages ago she saw the commencement, and unimpaired herself, has seen most of them pass completely away, and become mere names with which the historian plays, to the delight or the fatigue of his readers.

How can the perpetual youth and energy of the Catholic Church during all that time be accounted for, unless by admitting that she is a divine institution? Has her history been one in which she could not well help living on, strong and vigorous, because all men were her friends, each one ready to protect her and to further her progress? Quite the contrary. Opposition has at once appeared against her as soon as she has either brought her rich blessings and graces to a country, or has, at last, settled down, as it seemed, peaceably in the land. Indeed, it could hardly be otherwise. Opposition is her natural portion. She stands for righteousness. Her endeavor is to draw men off from the wickedness of the world. She starts by being an enemy to evil, to the base and the sordid, which are all rampant in human society, whether that society be in a savage, or a half-civilized or a perfectly civilized condition, and in all of these forms it has been her lot to contend with it. The opposition of the world was the legacy left to her by Christ Himself, who foretold how big her

future was, not with ease and comfort, not with earthly applause and esteem, not with the smiles and the praises of rulers, but with "tribulation," with the "hatred of all men," with "calumny," with constant and continual trouble, because she was to stand for light and sanctity of conduct in a world whose predominant marks are "those things which savor not of God."

Throughout the ages she is the one bright spot in a condition of the greatest gloom. From the sixth to the thirteenth century the continent of Europe was filled with armed bands; nation was against nation, town against town, house against house, each man's right hand was against his neighbor. Down from the highest hill, over the widest plain, in the walled city, among the inhabitants of the straggling and the scattered villages, rapine and plunder, oppression of the weak by the strong, and naturally fierce bitterness for the strong felt by the weak, reigned supreme. The Catholic Church and she alone dispelled this gloom. She brought peace instead of contention, light instead of darkness, and where universal chaos had reigned she introduced order.

Nevertheless, the general reward which she received for these blessings took the shape sometimes of a mild form of persecution, and, often enough, of persecution acute, sharp, and prolonged. The swords of emperors and of kings which should have been used for her protection were frequently directed against her. Often the blessing of liberty for herself and the rights of humanity for the poor, whom she took under her special protection, were obtained from barbarous monarchs only at the price of many privations borne by a great number of her popes, and by much fierce animosity shown to many of her bishops. Barons and nobles viewed with envy every piece of land which she, by means of her religious men, had redeemed from the wilderness or from the barren mountain and turned into a flourishing cornfield, and the baron and the nobleman of those days no sooner began to envy with the heart than they commenced to rob with the hand. If she brought to us the priceless boon of civilization, as she did; if she delighted in educating and in instructing the poor, and the universities of Europe show that she did so; if she taught brotherly love and fostered it, and the guilds and brotherhoods—the benefit societies of the Middle Ages—her own creation, show, again, how earnest were her endeavors with regard to that virtue, if, we repeat, she scattered the blessings of piety, of charity and of knowledge among all, nevertheless, the pages of history are

full of the strong and the violent opposition to which she has had, all along, to submit.

In spite of it all she lives. In spite of it all she is strong and flourishing. There is even now an amount of religious fervor and enthusiasm among her members such as can be found in no other institution. Her ministers still move as one man; filled with one object; fighting, in times of renewed opposition, for one end; fired even in days of quietness and of calm with one desire—the progress and the triumph of the Catholic Church, which is the triumph of the kingdom of Christ. Nowhere do we meet with the same spontaneous manifestation of tender love for Christ, of deep faith in the next world, and of serious anxiety about the kingdom of God as we do among Catholics. Who has not been struck with the sight so frequent in Catholic lands, of the peasant kneeling before the large Crucifix erected on the roadside; or of young and old joining together to recite the Rosary in the shades of a thick wood or ascending the mountain path; or of the figures in a dark church silently making the Way of the Cross; or of the bent forms of hundreds in the streets greeting the Blessed Sacrament in procession; or of the continual foot fall, throughout the day, of those that enter the House of God, snatching a moment from the busy occupations of life to pray before the Lord hidden upon the altar?

Such a faith as this is evidently a living thing, and, as is the case with all life, it moves quietly and unobtrusively, as shown in the simple religious habits of the people in the midst of whom it has existed now for so many centuries. And as with all life there is a tenacity, a clinging to existence exemplified in the spirit of which martyrs are made which is to be found in no other society as it is among us. In these days when submission to the very slightest inconvenience on behalf of religious opinion is becoming more and more rare, you will still find in Catholicism the material of which the ancient martyrs of the Christian faith were made. So extensively and so widespread is it to be found that, were an attempt made in any country to put an end to the Church, most thinking people are convinced that the attempt could be made only by wading through streams of blood shed by an enthusiastic and a faithful laity. Of what other faith can so much as this be said?

Throughout the ages, then, the Church of the living God has gone triumphantly on its way. The open enemy, the false friend, the un-

grateful child, have all done their best and their worst to disturb its peace, to destroy its unity, and, by so doing, to make an end of it. The devil has even tried what moral evil would do in the way of bringing about this result. He has tried to corrupt the Church by rotten and unworthy members, by wickedness even in the holiest places. Everything has been used to destroy the institution founded by Christ, and everything has failed. But everything has failed because, although the Church is made up of human beings on earth, she is a divine creation, and is kept and preserved by the same Divine Power which, two thousand years ago, called her into existence.

XXXII. SUBMISSION TO RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JAMES BELLORD, D.D.

"Unless you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven."—Matt. xviii, 3.

SYNOPSIS.—I. Must become as little children if we are to receive God's word. The existence of authority in the Church is the will of Christ. Hence submission on our part. Submission to authority most distasteful to this age on account of the great discoveries in the natural order—no mystery too deep in the supernatural for the man of this age. This is the position of many outside the fold.

II. Christ sets before us a little child as a model; must imitate the virtues of a child if we wish entrance into the kingdom of heaven—submission, dependence, and confidence in others. Submission to others has been commanded by God Himself and St. Paul. Principle of religious submission manifested in the Old as well as in the New Testament.

III. God limits man's natural rights and liberties, and this limitation is not derogatory to human dignity. (a) Man's dependence throughout life is seen by a consideration of childhood and manhood—in matters of nourishment and education—the necessity of submission to an organization, else no social life. (b) An enlightened age, still we are bound to seek the advice of physicians, lawyers, etc. (c) The foolhardiness of man insisting on his capability of judging in a realm of knowledge above his nature—religion.

IV. Principle of private judgment means the choosing of a different teacher as often as one so desires. In the Reformation freedom of thought was permitted only against the Catholic Church, but not in matters that pertained to the reformers' own judgments. The incongruity of modern exponents of the principle of private judgment and requisite conditions for membership of a sect—the heresy trials of ministers. The value of the Catholic Church in this matter—a truth stated by her means that its acceptance is guaranteed. The evil consequences of the principle of private judgment in practice. Unity of Christendom destroyed—obscurity of the great truths of revelation—decline of morality—supernatural virtues seldom found. Hence it is a blessing that members of Protestant sects do not strictly maintain this principle.

V. Beneficial results of submission to qualified authority. Only method whereby man may be certain of divine teachings. Submission a glory and a happiness for the children of the Church. Subjection of the intellect to the word of God proclaimed by the Church the surest way to acquire that freedom with which Christ has made us free and that dignity which belongs to His sons.

I. No living man has the right to speak such words as these. But when God reveals His mysteries to us, there is no other condition so suited to His dignity and to the character of His revelation. Hum-

ble, unquestioning, childlike submission to His word—by this alone can we qualify ourselves to apprehend religious truth, and merit the grace to understand it and adhere to it. Our Lord has committed the administration of His kingdom to certain spiritual officials. We have to hear them as we would hear Him. Submission to them is submission to Him. The principle on which His Church is administered is the principle of authority.

The very mention of such a thing as this—submission to a religious authority—is, to a large number of mankind, nothing less than an outrage. Submission of any kind is not for them. They are independent, free, masters of themselves, the final judges of every truth; their will is their only law. Man has subjected the earth to his dominion, he has discovered the most recondite truths; the truths of the spiritual world must, he thinks, appear before his judgment and crave his approval. The human race has passed from childhood to maturity. Every man is now a portion of the sovereign power that reigns and legislates; and how shall he submit himself to absolute rule in spiritual matters? If there is any subject on which men must have the fullest liberty to indulge all the vagaries of imagination and passion, it is religion. How shall they give up this privilege? The one reproach against the Catholic Church on which her adversaries are most united, and which excites their wildest indignation, is that she puts forth her religious and moral doctrines as being the Word of God and infallibly true; and that she demands the submission of the intellect, and the acceptance, on her word, of truths that are beyond our investigation. This is described as enslaving the mind, strangling free inquiry, keeping the world in a state of childhood and ignorance, trampling human rights and so on. The Church, therefore, is set down as the enemy of investigation and truth, light and knowledge, and as a fatal influence that must be resisted at all costs. It is not long since Protestants celebrated the centenary of the great heresiarch Luther. Never before was there such a religious hero. This saint of the Reformation was a man distinguished for his grossness, gluttony, and violence, for filthiness of speech, violation of sacred vows, arrogance, and cruelty. Yet all this is overlooked for the sake of his hostility to the divine authority of the Church, and he is glorified as the father of modern religious liberty. He is the father indeed of obstinacy and self-will, pride and rebellion, error and disunion. Never was any man's character more opposite to the inno-

cence, gentleness, purity, and love, which Our Lord shows in His own life and inculcates in the Gospel.

II. The model set before us by our Divine Lord is a little child. "Jesus calling unto him a little child, set him in the midst of them, and said: Amen, I say to you, unless you be converted and become as little children, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, he is the greater in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. xviii, 2-4). The qualities of childhood are most beautiful and deserving of love. The chief are innocence and lowliness, submission and simple confidence, dependence on others, readiness to believe and follow proper guidance; the very reverse of the qualities of the heresiarch as the man of the world, the reverse of self-sufficiency, conceit, and irreverent inquiry. As children to their parents, so should we act toward God. The same virtues which make the charm of childhood gain us the love of our Creator. In dealing with the world we must be warriors, courageous and firm, persisting in what is right, enduring ill-treatment, never hesitating or yielding. Toward God we must be as children, leaving ourselves in His hands, not presuming to discuss or doubt when He teaches us, suppressing all will of our own in the face of His commands.

The submission which we owe to God He has bidden us to show to His deputies. God does not speak to us individually by separate revelations, but through His Apostles, and Prophets, and Pontiffs. He has appointed an organized body to rule and teach in His name, and He has written their credentials in Holy Scripture. "He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me" (Luke x, 16). The Apostle of the Gentiles indicates clearly that this is the only method used by Divine Providence in instructing mankind. Our faith is not from special illumination, nor from private investigation, nor from scientific and critical proceedings, but "Faith cometh by hearing." "How shall they believe him, of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they be sent?" (Rom. x, 14, 15, 17). In these passages is contained our sole rule of knowledge and safety, submission to religious authority.

The general principles of religion are the same in the Old and the New Testament. The New is a fulfilment and a development, not a reversal of the Old. All sacred history shows us God ruling his people by Patriarchs, and Prophets, and Judges, by Moses and

Aaron, and their successors in the priestly power. They were invested with full authority. They spoke in the name of God and under His direction. To obey them was to obey God Himself. In the case of hard and doubtful judgments, the command of God was this: "Arise and go up to the place which the Lord thy God shall choose. And thou shalt come to the priests of the Levitical race, and to the judge that shall be at that time; and thou shalt ask of them, and they shall show thee the truth of the judgment. And thou shalt do whatever they shall say that preside in the place which the Lord shall choose, and what they shall teach thee according to his law; and thou shalt follow their sentence; neither shalt thou decline to the right hand nor to the left hand. But he that will be proud, and refuse to obey the commandment of the priest who ministereth at that time to the Lord thy God, and the decree of the judge, that man shall die, and thou shalt take away the evil from Israel" (Deut. xvii, 8-12). As time went on, the direct management of secular matters was taken out of the hands of the religious authority, and committed to the civil power and other men of ability, but decisions as to faith and morals still remained in the hands of God's deputies; and the same authority passed on without diminution into the hands of the Apostles, and of those who succeeded to their functions, the body of the teaching Church.

III. If in these ordinations God had chosen to withdraw from men part of that dominion which naturally belongs to them, who are we to dare resist this supreme Will, and refuse a sacrifice demanded by One to whom our lives and our whole being belong? "O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" (Rom. ix, 20). But there is nothing derogatory to human dignity. There is no suppression of natural rights and liberties in what God demands of us. Submission and dependence belong to our present condition, and are as essential to our life as the air we breathe, or the food we eat.

1. We are born dependent, we receive our lives through the will and the action of our parents. In our early years we are under the absolute control of others for our nourishment and our education. We arrive at manhood, we become our own masters, but only to a limited extent; we are subject to a whole hierarchy of superiors; we must regulate our lives according to the customs that others have created; we must conform ourselves to a multitude of laws; we

are limited and restrained at every moment, not only by legal statutes, but by the irresistible pressure of the crowd of men among whom we live. We must live in submission or be crushed. This is the rule of existence. No one is exempt; not even those who hold the supreme power of government. Without this submission, no organization, no social life is possible; without it, a community of men would be no more than a horde of savages, each at war with all, each in danger from others, and each a danger to all others. There is one God whom all are bound to serve; there are certain truths which are true at all times and to all men; there is one rule of moral rectitude always the same. To say that men have these common interests, and common duties, and common action, is to say that they form a harmonious community in religious matters, that there must be some sort of organization among them; and if so, that there must be grades of religious authority and subordination. Anarchy in religion does not indeed produce the same physical horrors as civil anarchy; mankind has grown accustomed to the spectacle, so as not to perceive how irrational and unnatural it is; but in truth, the religious organization of men, coming directly from God and looking directly to Him, must needs bear the impress of His perfections more distinctly than political organizations; therefore a religious system that is without unity, harmony, or submission, is more alien than civil discord, insecurity, and lawlessness, from the Spirit of Him who is the God not of dissension, but of peace.

2. It is not within the power of any man to dispense with guidance. This is a most enlightened age. What does that mean for the bulk of mankind? That they are more independent of instruction and guidance? On the contrary. It means that there are more masters and guides for them to follow, that there is less scope for the wanderings of their imagination, and less tolerance for their errors. Even the most skilful of men shape their conduct in most important matters on the information they obtain from others; they will not trust their own foresight without taking abundant counsel. Outside their own particular sphere, they are ready to submit unreservedly to a competent authority, to the opinion of a medical man, a lawyer, an engineer, a man of business. And even in his own sphere, a man knows he is no judge in his own case. The physician will call in another to prescribe for him, and will speak as respectfully of that other's opinion as if he himself were quite

ignorant of medicine. An eminent lawyer drew up his own will, and its irregularity and obscurity made it the subject of endless litigation. And what shall we say as to the capacity of men in general to guide themselves, ill-informed, undisciplined, prejudiced as they are, blinded by passion, unable to reason, obstinate, or weakly yielding to every fallacy? Of this educated generation it has been written, that none but the very few are capable of forming an opinion about anything that is not self-evident. Almost all men are slaves to the ideas and fashions of the society they live in. Only half a dozen in an age can shake themselves free from these influences and make full use of that liberty of thought that everyone boasts of possessing.

3. Dependence and subjection are necessary; but there is one region in which men insist on their capacity of judging for themselves, and their right to resist all authority. Strange to say, it is precisely that region which God has not made subject to man, of which He Himself has revealed the truths and laws, where He has commanded submission of the intellect, and appointed definite guides. Religion is far above human capacity, it belongs to another order of things, outside the natural order. It is a subject of the most awful importance, both during our present life and for unending eternity, and yet a subject obscure and difficult, which few have the time to investigate as it deserves, and fewer still the capacity; a subject which grows more uncertain as it is more closely scrutinized by human talent, and on which no man has ever gained the right to speak with the same authority as on chemistry or astronomy. Of all subjects it is the one which most manifestly requires to be communicated to us by superior authority, and where human investigation is limited to enquiring which is the Church that God has appointed as teacher, and commissioned to speak infallibly in His name.

IV. The enemies of the Church are never tired of contrasting the ignominies of religious subjection to authority, with the grandeur of being one's own master, of freely criticising, and choosing doctrines, and with the dignity of being responsible to God alone. But what is actually the alternative if we withhold our submission from a divine teacher? Is it absolute freedom and irresponsibility to any less than God? No. It is only the freedom of fickleness, the freedom of choosing another master as often as we like. Men being what they are, most of them must be guided in religious mat-

ters as in everything else. They can not think for themselves, they must accept the conclusions of others. The only question is whether they shall render an honest and open submission to the deputy appointed by God, or whether they shall be cajoled into a submission just as real, but disguised under the name of independence. The principle of the Reformation was the right of private investigation and the supremacy of private judgment. But as soon as the yoke of the Church was cast off, that principle was dropped in practice. Confessions of faith, and articles, and forms of worship were drawn up by the chief rulers of each sect and imposed on the consciences of their adherents. Each of the reformers aspired to be more than a Pope among his own followers. Liberty of thought was for him, subjection for them. Private judgment was allowed free exercise against the Catholic Church; but no father of the Reformation would tolerate any private judgment that differed from his own. Each one of them denounced and excommunicated all the others. Servetus was burned by his brother reformers at Geneva. The Church of England, as Protestant historians tell us, maintained its ascendancy by a bloodthirsty code of penal laws, directed against all who ventured to hold adverse opinions of their own.

The barbarities of those ages have ceased. This generation is more indifferent to religion and more tolerant. But still all the non-Catholic sects cry out against the submission which the Catholic Church receives from her members, and would gladly exact it for themselves. With equal vigor they proclaim freedom of thought and refuse it to others. If they really believe that every man is right in judging for himself, what is the meaning of their tests, and conditions of membership, and prosecutions for false teachings, and outcries about heresy? Why such enmity against those who leave them for some other form of religion? Why this unceasing suspicion and prejudice against those who sincerely believe in a Church, which all must acknowledge to be the oldest, the largest, the strongest form of Christianity, a Church which, even if all calumnies were true, has yet done more than any other for the benefit of humanity. A Catholic's belief rests on authority, but it is not the less on that account his private and conscientious conviction; yet the loudest advocates of liberty would deny to the majority of Christians the right to act on that conviction. The Church inspires Catholics with absolute confidence; why should they not show their confidence, or in other words their submission, when other men are considered justi-

fied in submitting to Churches which they trust only so far as they can see them? The fact is that there is no sincerity in this outcry against the submission of Catholics to their Church. Every religion claims it. The very existence of an organized church with preachers and laws is an assertion of authority and a demand for submission. The very fact of proclaiming any truth as truth is a demand that men shall submit their intelligence to it by accepting it. Those who think they have gained freedom by rejecting the claims of the Catholic Church are grievously mistaken, so long as they profess any other form of religion. They have only taken another master; they are still in a state of subjection, but without its name, and without its merit, and without its security.

We may inquire further what the principle of private judgment and freedom has amounted to in practice. Has the change in the basis of religion, the change from submission to independence, justified the high expectations that were proclaimed? It was said, and is still said by those who are indifferent to the teaching of facts, that the revolt against authority was the herald of an epoch of religious enlightenment and progress, of genuine fervor, and of manly virtues; events have proved it to be the most powerful dissolvent of religion. Under its influence the great unity of Christendom has become disintegrated into an enormous number of small bodies, and is gradually being resolved into its ultimate atoms. The great truths of revelation have become obscured, indefinite, uncertain, till they are found no longer tenable. The presence of God has ceased to be a reality to men. He eludes their irreverent investigation, He retires from their sight. Men leave God out of consideration in all their actions; they have become practically atheists, long before giving up the habitual forms of worship and of speech. The decline of morality has followed close on the decline of doctrines. The more divine and noble virtues have become almost extinct, outside the influence of the Catholic Church. Only the natural virtues are recognized, and they only so far as they are found profitable and expedient. Dishonesty, and falsehood, and lust, and avarice, are becoming the recognized rules of human life. Where some religious sense still exists outside the Catholic Church, its manifestations are as injurious to true religion as unbelief itself. It distorts doctrines, mixes up truth and errors into incoherent systems, revels in all sorts of fantastic extravagances, and makes piety ridiculous. So its tendency is to break up unity still more, to make revelation more

uncertain, to destroy more completely instead of building up, and to make religion seem discreditable as well as unreasonable. Whatever success any sect has had in maintaining divine truths and a respectable standard of conduct, has been due not to the principle of independence, but to the principle of authority. It has fortunately happened at times that the reformed sects have been untrue to the principle of their existence, have borrowed boldly the doctrines and practices of the Catholic Church which their ancestors rejected, and have defended them on the Catholic ground of religious submission. Except for this, the very name of religion would have been extinct outside the boundaries of the Church. The gain which has accrued from the revolt against submission in faith and morals has been to irreligion and not to religion, not to the knowledge and love of God, but to atheism and vice. The religious enlightenment of the world outside the Church's sphere is enlightenment only in the sense that the word bears in the mouths of the blasphemers, the profligate, and the infidel.

V. Submission to a qualified authority is the only path to religious truth. It is the only method which is accommodated to the character of religious truth itself, as being so lofty and so obscure, divine, and mysterious. It is the only method adapted to the circumstances of men, who are so limited in capacity, so occupied by labor, so indifferent, so sluggish, so unreliable in observing and reasoning. It is a method which accords with the goodness and wisdom of God, and with the supreme importance of the message He has to communicate to us; a method which He observed in His teachings with the Jews of old, which Our Lord Jesus Christ established anew in His teaching for the example of future times, and which the Apostles insist upon, as the only road to spiritual knowledge and salvation. This same method has been followed in the Church for over 1900 years; it has prevailed generally, except in a few instances and chiefly in modern times; it has proved its efficiency in the conversion of the world to Christianity, in the benefits it has brought to society, in the holiness and heroism it has inspired, in the unity of spirit and belief which it maintains throughout so enormous and heterogeneous a body. The frank acceptance of this principle by so many generations of free and enlightened men, their absolute conviction of its truth and strong attachment to it, prove that it meets a need in human nature, and is not subversive of human rights and liberties.

Submission to the Church is not, as many insist, an oppression and a disgrace, but it is the glory and the happiness of her children. They are enabled to render to God the homage of the noblest part of their nature, by bowing their intellect to the obedience of faith; for they submit themselves, not to man, but to God Himself, in recognizing the authority which He has delegated, and the messengers He has sent. Their submission does honor to themselves, not only as an act of generous sacrifice, but as delivering them from the servitude of error. No one who has any conception of the sacredness of truth can doubt that subjection to religious and moral errors is most evil in the sight of God, and most degrading slavery to men. It is incomprehensible that any should so glory in their shame as to rejoice in the absence of infallible guidance, and in the possibilities of ignorance and falsehood that are open to them. Truth is in a sense a limitation; because it is one, while the variations of falsehood are innumerable; and also because when it is once manifested to us, we have no longer the moral liberty, though we have still the power to call it in question or reject it in favor of error. But certainty about the truth deprives us of nothing. It is no part of our rights to be allowed to disbelieve the truth, it is no privilege to be uncertain what truth is. Our submission also limits our responsibilities and our dangers. It is often a terrible struggle to find out the teacher whom God has appointed and to dare to acknowledge him; but once the critical step is taken, God gives us a sense of rest and a security as to the rule of faith and living, that is only forfeited by very grievous sin. In this security there is nothing of fanatical enthusiasm, nothing compulsory or slavish. It is an honorable and voluntary assent grounded on the most positive intellectual conviction.

Those who humble themselves shall be exalted. Those who take up the yoke of Christ will be admitted to share His glory. Those who subject their intellect to the word of God and who practice submission and lowly obedience to faith, acquire thereby the freedom with which Christ has made us free, and the dignity which belongs to His sons.

XXXIII. THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS.

BY THE REV. BERTRAND L. CONWAY, C.S.P.

"For as the body is one, and hath many members; and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body, so also is Christ. For in one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free, and in one Spirit we have all been made to drink."—I Cor. xii, 12, 13.

SYNOPSIS.—Introduction.—St. Paul, the great teacher of the Communion of Saints. The dogma implies not a mechanical, forced or accidental unity, but an organic vital unity of all the members of Christ's real, mystical Body, the Church. It is an interworld unity of the faithful on earth, the souls in Purgatory, and the blessed in heaven. It is founded on the Redemption, and is given through the initiation of Baptism. It connotes a common share of all the brethren in the spiritual treasury of the Church, for the purpose of the salvation of souls and the glory of God.

I. The Church Militant.—All the faithful on earth share in the fruits of the Redemption, the Mass, the Sacraments and divine graces, and in the prayers and good works of one another. This idea is foreign to the non-Catholic, who denies the divinity of Christ, or believing in an imputed justification, denies the Mass, the sacramental system, the efficacy of good works, indulgences, etc. The efficacy of the prayers of the contemplative orders.

II. The Church Triumphant.—The communion between the blessed and ourselves consists (1) in their intercession for us; (2) in our asking their prayers; (3) in our imitation of their virtues. This is the teaching of the Scriptures and Christian antiquity. It does not imply (1) any derogation of the merits of Christ, the One Meditator, (2) or interfere in our relationship with God. The blessed know and love us.

III. The Church Suffering.—(1) We pray for them, and (2) they for us. The teaching of the Scriptures, the Fathers, the Liturgies.

Peroration.—The lessons of the dogma: (1) Unity in the bond of peace; (2) Zeal for the conversion of those not belonging to the Communion.

St. Paul is the great exponent of the dogma of the Communion of Saints. In letter after letter to the early Christians he pictures the redeemed of Christ united in one great brotherhood under the one divine Head, Christ Jesus—a brotherhood extending beyond the portals of death into the life of eternity, and embracing all "the fellow citizens of the saints and domestics of God" (Eph. ii, 20), on earth, in purgatory, and in heaven.

In his letter to the Church of Corinth, he teaches us that this interworld communion is not a mechanical unity as of a number of apples in a barrel, nor a forced unity as of convicts in a state prison,

nor a transient, accidental unity as of a trainload of passengers, but an organic, vital union, as is clear from his comparing it to the human body.

The human body is composed of many members, all differing from one another in function, strength, honor, and beauty (I Cor. xii, 18, 22, 23, 24), and yet made one and energized by the soul or principle of life. Take away from the body the soul that nourishes the various members in a marvelous unity of operation and harmony of development and instantly there is "a schism in the body" (I Cor. xii, 25) that causes disintegration and death.

So likewise in the Communion of Saints, or the mystical body of Christ. In the concept of the Apostle all men are saints, not because they dwell before God's throne enjoying the Beatific Vision, but because they are "called to be saints" (I Cor. i, 2) by the reason of their partaking of the fruits of Christ's redemption in the Sacrament of Baptism. "For in one Spirit were we all *baptized* into one body" (I Cor. xii, 13). "One body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. iv, 4, 5).

Christ the Saviour is the soul of life of His mystical body, for the infinite graces that He won for us by His death on the Cross, are "poured forth into our hearts through His Spirit which is given us," especially in the receiving of His Body and Blood in the Holy Eucharist, "For we being many are one bread, one body, all that partake of one Bread." "And in one Spirit, we have all been made to drink," i. e. of the chalice of the Blood of Christ. (I. Cor. x, 17; xii, 13.)

Death has no power to break the bond of fellowship of those "Who have received the Spirit of adoption of sons" (Rom. viii, 15). The Sons of God who have won the crown incorruptible, "having suffered on earth with Christ, are now glorified with Him" (Rom. viii, 17), while those who are still defiled with slight sin suffer for a time in the prison until the last farthing of their debt is paid (Apoc. xxi, 27; Matt. v, 26). The fellowship of the triumphant and the suffering church with their brethren of the militant church is most close and intimate, because their love has become intensified in the fire of suffering, and in the presence of the Infinite Love of the Triune God.

The Communion of Saints that we speak of in the Apostles' Creed, beloved brethren, implies a common participation of all the faithful in the spiritual treasury of Christ's mystical body, the Church.

We believe that our Saviour instead of redeeming us by His life of bitter poverty and His death of shameful crucifixion might have saved us by a word. Out of love for us, however, He suffered a thousand times more than was necessary to save many worlds. These infinite merits, together with the superabundant merits of Christ's mother and His saints, exist always, forming a great spiritual treasury, confided to the Church, and accessible to every member of the Communion of Saints. As men who are stockholders in a great business corporation co-operate with each other toward a common purpose, and share proportionately the profits of the concern, so the members of Christ's body unite for one purpose, the glory of God and the salvation of their souls, and share according to their merits the "unsearchable riches of Christ" (Eph. iii, 8).

1. *The Church Militant.*

The faithful who are still on earth combating for Christ against the three enemies of their salvation—the World, the Flesh, and Satan—are known as the Church Militant. This is a scriptural term borrowed from the strong and forcible imagery of St. Paul. We all remember that striking portrait of the Christian soldier which he painted while a prisoner in Rome living in the midst of military sights and sounds. "Put you on the armor of God," he writes to the Christians of Ephesus, "the strong belt of truth, the shining breastplate of justice, faith and love (I Thess. v, 8), the heavy sandals of the Gospel of peace, the large shield of faith, the close-fitting helmet of salvation, and the sharp sword of the Spirit" (Eph. vi, 11-17; Cf. I Cor. ix, 7; II Cor. x, 4; I Tim. i, 18; II Tim. ii, 3).

"The weapons of our warfare are not carnal" (II Cor. x, 4), but spiritual, and by the mercy of God are all stored ready for us in the vast armory of His Church. What are the treasures which the soldiers of Christ share with one another in their holy communion? When the Apostle cried out of old "I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. ii, 20), he spoke of the life of divine grace, which he lived in virtue of his close union with Christ, His Head, and which every member of that Body may possess for the asking.

Whence comes the divine life? From the dying Jesus on Calvary's Cross. There must the generations of God's people go to drink of the "fountain springing up into life everlasting" (John iv, 14). There must the sick go to be healed by the Great Physician

(Luke v, 31). There must the dead be brought that they too "may walk in the newness of life" (Rom. vi, 4).

The sterile faith of non-Catholic Christians with its denial of the Mass and the sacramental system would have its people rest in a mere imputed holiness of Christ who is separated from us by a vast gulf of nearly two thousand years, or worse still, make the bond of fellowship consist in a mere imitation of the virtues of Christ, the perfect man. With us, beloved brethren, how different! Our glorious heritage is not merely the life and death of a perfect man, whose virtues we are called upon to reverence and to imitate, but the life and death of the Man-God, Christ Jesus, our Origin, our Lord, and our Destiny. We know and believe that His death upon the Cross does not merely hide our sins from the anger of His avenging Father, but washes them as "white as snow" (Isaias i, 18), if we but choose to drink of the fountains of His redeeming Blood, as it flows forever in the mercy of the sacrifice of the Mass, and the seven divine channels of the Redemption.

This common heritage of the perpetual sacrifice of adoration, thanksgiving, propitiation, and impetration—this common share in the seven sources of supernatural life and holiness—this common treasury of prayers and good works which the children of the redeemed lay up daily for the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. xix, 21), and for their brethren—this Life of the Grace of God constitutes the Communion of Saints upon earth. Wherever Mass is said, wherever Jesus Christ is received in the Eucharistic communion, the priest and people pray, not only for themselves or for a few chosen souls, but for every member of Christ's mystical Body. Whether they pray in the churches, in the convents, in their homes, in their workshops, the eyes of all the faithful are directed to the Cross of the Altar—Calvary, and their hearts go out in love and compassion for their brethren of the Communion of Saints.

They are all fighting for the one reward, they are all meeting with the same trials and hardships, they are all enjoying the same blessings. "If one member suffer anything, all the members suffer with it; or if one member glory, all the members rejoice with it" (I Cor. xii, 26). And so these millions help one another by constantly asking Jesus to comfort the sorrowing, to help the wavering, to succor the strongly tempted, to convert the man of little faith or hope or love. Who can estimate the efficacy of such prayers? Who can dream of the miracles of conversion that they work? Only our

Saviour can tell us, when we meet Him in the Kingdom of His Father.

The world is often lavish in its praise of those Orders of religious men and women, who preach the Gospel to the heathen, sacrifice their lives among the lepers, or devote themselves day after day to the sick, the aged and the suffering. But they find it hard to give one word of praise to those cloistered souls, who "do nothing" as they say, "but pray."

We of the Communion of Saints, taught by the Holy Spirit the divine efficacy of prayer, know that these souls are making up for the great lack of prayer in the world. They are asking God's mercy upon the hardened sinner, beseeching the conversion of the pagan, the unbeliever and the heretic, atoning for the blasphemies of the renegade Catholic, sustaining the active ones who labor for Christ amid the busy world unmindful of Him. Only the day of judgment will reveal to us all the good wrought by these hidden saints of the cloister.

The doctrine of indulgences, so hard for an outsider to grasp, is intimately connected with the dogma of the Communion of Saints. We may have received the Sacrament of Penance, and have been forgiven our grievous sins, and the eternal punishment they deserved; but still there may remain a debt of temporal punishment which we must pay here or hereafter. The Church as the representative of Christ not only claims the power of pardoning sin, but of remitting part or all of the punishment it deserves. She goes to her spiritual treasury of the merits of Christ and His saints, and when cleansed of sin we have manifested our good-will by our fasting, our prayers, or our alms-giving, she applies to us individually, according to our love, the merits which will free us partially or wholly from the debt of temporal punishment. How false to say that an indulgence is a permission to commit sin, when the first condition of gaining it is to be free from all grievous sin.

2. *The Church Triumphant.*

The faithful who have "fought the good fight and attained eternal life" (I Tim. vi, 12) in the perfect happiness of the Beatific Vision, are known as the Church Triumphant. The communion between them and us consists in their making continual intercession for us

before the throne of God, and in our invoking their prayers, imitating their virtues, and honoring them as God's special friends.

Protestant Christians, although they repeat the words of the symbol "I believe in the Communion of Saints," deny this intercommunion. They hold that the saints in heaven are totally ignorant of what happens upon earth, and that therefore it is useless for us to ask their intercession.

By such a denial they separate themselves from the teaching of Christian antiquity and contradict the Word of God they pretend so much to reverence. St. Paul assures the early Christians of their fellowship with the angels and saints in heaven, and surely the fellowship he describes can not imply ignorance, indifference, or disunion. "You are come to Mt. Sion and to the City of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the company of many thousands of angels, and to the church of the first born, who are written in the heavens, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the just made perfect, and to Jesus" (Heb. xii, 22-24).

St. James tells us that "the continual prayer of a just man availeth much" (v, 16), and the Bible insists frequently on the efficacy of intercessory prayer in this life (Gen. xviii; Ex. xvii; Job xlii; Rom. xv, 30; Eph. vi, 18; I Thess. v, 28). Is it reasonable to suppose that the face to face vision of God deprives a saint of the power of prayer he possessed while upon earth? The early Christians did not think so, for hardly had a martyr died for Christ than his brethren asked the help of his prayers. How beautifully Catholic is the letter of the martyr Bishop Cyprian writing to Pope Cornelius in the third century: "If one of us shall, by the speediness of the divine dispensation, depart hence the first, let our love continue in the presence of the Lord; let not prayer for our brethren and sisters cease in the presence of the mercy of the Father" (Ad. Cornel. 57).

But, say our Protestant brethren, does not the intercession of the saints detract from the glory due to Christ the Saviour, and depreciate the infinite merits of His mediation? By no means. For the intercession of Christ is unique and totally distinct from the intercession of His followers in heaven. He is the one Mediator of justice in virtue of His redemption, according to the Apostle: "There is one Mediator of God and men—the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a redemption for all" (I Tim. ii, 5, 6). The saints are the mediators of grace, and are helpful to us only by virtue of their union with Him. Their mediation, therefore, being in a true sense

His own, instead of detracting from His glory and honor, tends to increase both. It is childish to believe that He is insulted, if His loved ones add their strong prayers to our feeble ones.

But why not go to God directly, continue our objectors? Does not the divine invitation read: "Come unto me, all ye that labor?" (Matt. xi, 28). Catholics answer this appeal more frequently and more really than any outsider can when they visit the Eucharistic Christ at the holy sacrifice of the Mass, and receive Him into their hearts in holy communion (John vi, 57).

The revelation of God assures us that the same law holds in things divine as in things human. If I desire a favor of a man, I may ask him directly, or indirectly through his wife or a personal friend. The request ultimately must come to him. So it is in the supernatural life. I may always pray to God through His only Son, or feeling a sense of God's majesty and my own unworthiness, I may pray the saints to plead my case in the presence of the Lord. The saints no more interfere with our access to Christ than the pipe which carries the water from the reservoir prevents that water from entering our houses. They are links in the great chain of the Christian fellowship, uniting us one with the other in the bond of divine love. Like the angels of God, these children of the resurrection (Matt. xxii, 30; Luke xx, 36), rejoice when one sinner does penance (Luke xv, 10), and guard us from the danger of becoming aliens to their Lord and King (Matt. xviii, 10). As members of a household pray unceasingly for the repentant home-coming of the prodigal son or the erring daughter—as sailors making port think constantly of those still facing the dangers of the storm, so our triumphant brethren think continually of us and our struggles, and pray that we too may soon be blessed with their divine joy and peace.

Every saint in heaven, moreover, says to us with St. Paul: "Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ" (I Cor. xi, 1). Just as the state keeps alive the patriotic spirit by pointing constantly to the lives of her past heroes, so the Church Catholic stirs our languid souls to a more perfect following of Christ by holding up to us the heroes of purity, patience, humility, self-sacrifice, and love.

It is one of the great fruits of the Communion of Saints, that sinners, in their struggles or their despair, can think of their brethren, men and women like themselves, who have fought the good fight to the end.

3. *The Church Suffering.*

The faithful who have died in slight sin, or who have not paid to the last farthing (Matt. v, 26) the punishment due their transgressions are known as the Church Suffering. The communion between them and us consists in our praying for their release from suffering, and, according to a pious belief, in their praying for our salvation.

It does not fall within our scope at present to prove the existence of purgatory. Prayers for the faithful departed and the existence of an intermediate state are mentioned repeatedly in the Scriptures (II Mach. xii, 43-46), the writings of the early Fathers, the catacomb inscriptions, and the early liturgies. We simply call attention to the comfort it gives the Catholic to know with infallible certainty that death does not separate him utterly from his beloved. What despair in the heart of the unbeliever, when, uncertain of the hereafter, he cremates the body of a beloved wife! What emptiness in the heart of a Protestant who believes that the dead beloved sleeps on unconscious until the day of resurrection! We on the contrary follow our dead beyond the veil. We see the justice of God's punishment, for we realize His all-holiness, and the manifold transgressions of the soul departed. We have Masses said, and ask God to apply the infinite merits of His Christ; we offer up the good works we do in a state of grace, and the Church of God draws from her spiritual treasury her indulgences for their release; we pray unceasingly that God's mercy grant them eternal rest and peace.

They in turn pray constantly that God's grace help us to be faithful even to the end, if we may trust the pious belief of devout souls. At any rate we are certain, that even if they are unable to help us now, they will one day out of gratitude remember us before God's throne.

Such in brief, beloved brethren, is the Catholic dogma of the Communion of Saints. Let its one lesson be "the supporting of one another in charity, careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. iv, 2, 3). There is no narrowness in the communion: "There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii, 28). The true Catholic rises superior to every natural dictate of party spirit, whether it be the hatred of men of different nationality, the bitterness born of persecution in days past, or the despising of the poor, the lowly, and the sinner.

Are you Catholics—brethren of a marvelous interworld brotherhood, founded by Christ Jesus, the Creator, Redeemer, and Destiny of all men? Then let your hearts go out to those who are "without Christ, being aliens from the conversation of Israel, and strangers to the testament" (Eph. ii, 12). The Head of the Communion of Saints died for them all, and is anxious that "all be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. ii, 4). The saints reigning gloriously with God, many of whom spent their lives like St. Paul working for the conversion of the Gentiles, make continual intercession for those who "wander where there is no way" (Job xii, 24). The saints suffering in purgatory, secure of their own salvation, offer up their sufferings that the other sheep return to the fold of the One Shepherd (John x, 16).

It will be one of the joys of the Kingdom of Heaven to have many souls thank us for the prayers we prayed that they might obtain through the merits of Christ the grace to enter the eternal communion of all the saints of God.

XXXIV. THE REMISSION OF SINS.

BY THE REV. DR. C. BRUEHL.

"Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven."—John xx.

SYNOPSIS—Awful state of the sinner: his utter helplessness; he is dead, the hours waiting to bury him in hell. Is there nothing to prevent this terrible doom? Confession is the remedy.

I. Institution of Confession. Wonderful charm surrounding this scene. Air of peace. Christ makes the Apostles judges of sin, for here is a double sentence of forgiveness and retaining. The judgment of mercy in the confessional compared to the last judgment. Objects: The sinner will deal with God immediately. How dare you appear before Him, whom you have so grievously offended. Why reveal sins to a frail man? This is a merciful condescension.

II. The requirement for Confession in harmony with human nature. Nature itself relieved by a confession of the crime committed. Self-knowledge condition of amendment. Confession forces it upon us. Confession sign of good will and earnest of amendment. Confession humiliating, destroys greatest enemy of conversion—pride.

III. Its blessings. Gives security and peace, because certainty of forgiveness. Individual exhortations in confessional, which we can not evade. Resists the beginnings of crime. Restitution. Blessings for individual. Family society. If in sin, hasten to the confessional. Nothing can destroy sin but the absolution of the priest. Better this judgment of mercy than the terrible sentence of the inexorable Judge of last judgment.

Dear Friends: St. John describes the terrible condition of him who has fallen into mortal sin. These are his words: "I know thy works, that thou hast the name of being alive and thou art dead." And such is indeed the deplorable state of the sinner: it is spiritual death. Having lost sanctifying grace, he has forfeited the supernatural life. In the eyes of God he is a corpse, a repulsive, loathsome object, fit only to be hurried out of his sight and hidden in darkness. The more awful is this state, as the sinner in the eyes of the world retains the outward semblances of life. He performs his daily duties, he practices his religion, he does good deeds; yet all the while he is dead at heart. There is something ghastly and appalling in this thought. It is not, however, exaggerated; but faithfully portrays the reality. For even Our Lord Himself calls the Pharisees whitened graves filled with decay and dead men's bones.

We then understand the utter helplessness of the sinner; his complete inability to rise from his sad condition. He can do nothing

for himself; his lips are sealed by the silence of death; his ear is closed against the call of penance; he can not uplift his hands in prayer. His faith has become languid and powerless; the flame of love is extinguished in his heart. And the fleeting hours are waiting to carry him, the spiritual corpse, out of this world and bury him in hell.

Is there nothing to avert this dreadful doom? Is there no hope for the sinner? Is there no balm in Gilead for the fatal wound of sin? Ah, my friends, it is wonderful, but true; there exists a remedy; there is distilled a healing balm for the mortal wounds of sin. And this precious balm oozes from the tree of the Cross; it is the Blood of our Redeemer. For to save us from hell, to restore us to the life of grace, He shed His divine Blood and prepared an infallible antidote against sin.

And we are eager to learn, in whose hands this life-giving remedy is deposited, under what conditions we may be brought back to the life of grace. We anxiously inquire: "Who will open the bolts of the grave of sin?" It is our Lord who condescends to answer: "Go, show yourselves to the priests" (Luke xvii, 14). For to them He has said: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven."

We know that this power of forgiveness is exercised in the Sacrament of Penance; familiarly spoken of as Confession. Let us therefore meditate on (a) the institution of Confession, (b) its conformity to human nature, and (c) its great utility.

I. We open the Gospel record and read: "Now when it was late that same day, and the doors were shut, where the disciples were gathered together, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them: Peace be to you." "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you." When He had said this, He breathed on them; and He said to them: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." An unusual charm surrounds this scene. A note of tenderness rings in the words of Our Lord. Everything is wrapped in an atmosphere of calm and peace. It is as though Our Lord brought the peace and happiness of another world to His disciples. This peace is the fruit of His Cross; the sweet blossom of His suffering and its perfume fills their hearts. He brings peace, for He conquered the enemies of peace, sin and death, the jarring discords in our life. He came into this world to overthrow the rule of sin

and deliver men from the slavery of death. And He was victorious, and now is peace. But yet sin remains and will forever disturb this sacred peace, this holy truce of God. And therefore the power over sin must remain with men, that it may not again enslave the world. Thus Our Lord promises us the Spirit of holiness, the Holy Ghost, who upbuilds the kingdom of God in our hearts and sanctifies the souls. And He commits to His disciples the direct power over sin. They can remit sin, destroy sin, and give peace, even as Our Lord overcame sin and earned peace. "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven."

But this power of forgiveness is to be exercised not in the form of a general pardon and amnesty; but in the form of a judicial verdict. "Whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." Where there is more than one sentence possible, there must be a judgment, a deliberation on the case, an inquest; there the matter of the judgment must be examined and accordingly brought before the judge. Christ, therefore, makes His Apostles judges over sin and sinner. He erects a tribunal, wherein sin may be accused and remitted. He gives His Apostles the power in some cases, as they may judge fit, to retain sin and refuse forgiveness for the time being. But if the Apostles are the judges, then sin must be declared and denounced before them and the sinner must abide their decision. He humbly must declare his transgressions, for he alone knows them. Yes, the sacramental absolution is a judgment, a sentence; and the confessional is a tribunal, a court of justice. And it reminds us of another sentence that will be pronounced over sin, that of the last judgment. How great the difference. Here a whispered accusation under the seal of everlasting silence; there a confounding accusation before the whole world, overwhelming the sinner with shame and disgrace; here a remission of sin, a perfect reconciliation or in the very worst case a delay of forgiveness; there an irreversible verdict of guilty and eternal condemnation. God has forestalled that terrible judgment of His wrath by a judgment of mercy. Yes a judgment it remains, for the world must be convinced of sin, and of justice, and of judgment. But Christ has contrived to satisfy the demands of justice and of mercy. He has set up a tribunal of justice, in which, however, justice is almost effaced and annulled by mercy.

Thus the sinner to receive remission of sins and peace of soul, must submit his crimes to the sentence of the judge, established by Christ. This is that glorious power of the keys, that unlocks the

chains of sin, unbolts the gates of death and snatches the victim from the jaws of hell. "Show yourselves to the priests," that they may judge your failings mercifully and blot out your misdeeds.

You object, my friends; you will not show yourselves to the priests? You will deal immediately with God and receive pardon at his hands?

Ah, with your soul stained and black, your hands red with iniquity, you would dare to appear before the face of God, who is a consuming fire? You would argue your case with God, the All-holy? Who will stand the searching eye of the Lord? I could understand your presumption, if you had offended God once, and by some slight transgression. But repeatedly you have offended Him, outraged His majesty, and heaped injury on injury. And yet you would dare to speak to Him face to face? Nay, my friends, if we have grievously insulted another man, we are ashamed to appear in his presence, we dare not anticipate his pardon. We seek the intervention of a friend, who will ask pardon in our name. No, if you understand at all the gravity of your repeated offences, you will not presume to appear before the face of God, before you have the assurance of His forgiveness.

Again you say: Why should I unveil my shortcomings to a weak and frail man? Thank God, that it is a frail man, who is appointed your judge; a man who sympathizes with you because he himself struggles against sin and temptation. You can only gain by this substitution. How severe would an angel judge us, he who has never experienced the revolt of the flesh, who is as remote from our daily imperfections as the sun is from the earth. This is a merciful tribunal, because frail man judges his erring brother in the name of Him, who would not condemn the wretched adultress, who would not extinguish the smoking flax, who ate with sinners and forgave the thief on the cross.

II. I doubt whether in any Sacrament the requirements of validity are as much and patently in harmony with human nature and the demands of sound reason, as in the Sacrament of Penance. Alone from this manifest conformity to human needs, we might infer its divine origin. For who understands better our nature than God, our Maker, and He who has borne our infirmities; who could therefore provide better for our needs and wants. The Sacrament of Penance, and more especially Confession, bears in all the stamp of a divine work.

There is no burden weighing heavier on our souls, than that of

guilt; no sting rankling more virulently in our hearts than the memory of a secret, shameful crime; no pain that can be compared to the torture of remorse. The sin we have committed will be with us as our very shadow; when we least think of it, suddenly that shadow falls across our path, startling and alarming our mind; it accompanies us to our restless couch and stares at us with reproachful eyes. The memory of their crime has driven criminals stark mad; it has pursued them, haunted them as a frightful specter, till they sought rest and peace of mind under the very shadow of the gallows and courted death by delivering themselves to the earthly judge. Everyone has experienced the wonderful relief and peace, that follows upon the avowal of our fault; how light and blithe does our heart feel after we have unbosomed the secret of our guilt. However, there are faults, committed in some dark hour of weakness, that make the tide of shame rush to our brows, which we would not reveal to any one at the peril of our life. And meanwhile they torment our soul, prey on our mind, hover about us as somber specters. At times then we crave and long to reveal that secret of our shame, but we dare not, for we would destroy our good name, and even offend our friends. But there is one to whom we may reveal our shame, into whose ear we may pour our tale of disgrace, without endangering our honor and fortune. It is the priest in the confessional. He is ever ready to listen to your revelation, of your sad weakness; is appointed by God to be the confidential friend of the sinner, whose lips burn to free themselves from their terrible secret; and when you are freed from your anxiety, peace is restored to your mind, the voice of remorse is silenced; and your secret is buried in the priest's heart, as though you had sunk it in the depths of the ocean; for his lips are sealed with a silence as the silence of death.

Nothing is more important for our self-improvement, more conducive to a change of life than a knowledge of self and our past failings. Generally we are little aware of the many disorders in our daily life; we do not reflect, and continue in our frivolity and wickedness. If one would place a mirror before our soul, and let us see the imperfections and shortcomings of even one day, we would be terrified at the sight of such a number of sins and their gravity; we would walk more cautiously, do penance and lead a better life. The holy Sacrament of Penance forces this wholesome, but not always relished, knowledge of self and our sins upon us. Since it

requires a detailed accusation of our faults, it makes an examination of our conscience necessary. Many would never reflect on their lives, never probe their hearts, never be brought face to face with all their imperfections, were it not for the examination of conscience, exacted by the Sacrament of Penance. Even for this one reason Confession is highly salutary and helpful, because it compels us to know ourselves, and acquaints us with the many sins we thoughtlessly commit.

Knowledge of our faults is the condition of an amendment of life; an honest acknowledgment of them is the beginning of this amendment, the first step on the highroad of conversion. We all know this: the child, that will not own its misdeed, is not sorry for it; the man who will not acknowledge that he has wronged his neighbor, does not deserve pardon. If you have before you a lad with tightly screwed lips, not admitting his fault, though he was caught red-handed, you give him up as incorrigible. As long as we do not confess our faults, we still cling to them, we have not entirely given them up. Therefore God requires a confession, an avowal of our guilt; thereby we internally separate ourselves from our sins and disentangle our hearts from evil inclinations. A man that confesses and condemns his former life, means to start a new life. Bring a man to confess his misdeeds and he is converted; as long as he cherishes them in his heart, a confession will never come from his lips.

Moreover, the root of all sins is pride. The remedy is humiliation. And Confession is this bitter but excellent medicine. Yes, it is humiliating to reveal one's sins and wounds to a priest; but how happy the result; that fatal root of sin, ever fertile and ever bringing forth new sprouts, is pruned; the obstinate heart is softened and bent under the yoke of Christ; the most dangerous passion is overcome and peace and serenity enter into our bosom that was chilled and choked by pride. You will never see a man who has made an honest confession, despite the confusion covering his brow, leave the confessional with a tightened, gloomy face. Everything is ease, self-possession, calm, joy, and light-heartedness.

III. In the preceding point we have seen the beneficial influence the Sacrament of Penance exerts on man, because its requirements are so perfectly in harmony with human nature. But there are other blessings, which we will now contemplate in detail.

I will illustrate one of these blessings by a story. There was a

wayward boy. He had fallen into the hands of bad companions. Sadly he disgraced the untarnished name of his father and broke his mother's heart. Finally he left his home not wishing to hear the reproaches of his father and the silent upbraidings of his own conscience. In distant cities he continued his career of debauch and vice, until grace touched his heart. Then he hurried home, to obtain forgiveness from his father. Alas! when he reached his home he was told that his father shortly after his departure had died. Grief overwhelmed the undutiful child. His friend, however, assured him, that his father had forgiven him on his deathbed. "Ah, but why can I not hear the sweet words of forgiveness from his own lips." There was nothing that would comfort and cheer him, and for days he was seen at the grave lamenting and weeping. "Ah, if you would only open your cold lips once more, to tell me that you have forgiven your boy!"

Yes, my friends, the internal conviction that we have been forgiven is not enough; we wish to have this assurance by some outward unfailing sign. And as long as we hear not from our friends, whom we have offended, the consoling tidings of pardon our heart is ill at ease and troubled. Thus it is with the sinner: he has offended God. But who gives him the assurance that he has been forgiven? Who will tell him: Go, my friend, thy sins are forgiven. The Catholic can have this assurance, it is not by conjecture, that he knows he is pardoned. Nay, one who is authorized by God to give him this message of pardon; who sits there in the very place and in the name of God, tells him: My friend, God forgives; I forgive your sins in His name. Well, then, poor sinner, go in peace; you have heard the voice of God, as it once rang in the ears of Magdalen. Go in peace; thy sins are forgiven. Therefore, this atmosphere of peace surrounding the confessional, we leave it, not with the vague sentiment of forgiveness; but with the verbal assurance, the perfect certainty, that our sins are forgiven. We have heard the voice of Jesus.

The good that is wrought in that little box, in some obscure niche of the church, is incalculable. You know how one likes to evade the practical conclusions of a sermon, by making himself believe that they apply not to him, but to his neighbor. Here this self-deception can not crop up. The priest speaks to you, individually; not vaguely guessing and hinting at your faults, but clearly having them in view; touching the very spot. He speaks to you

earnestly, with all the fervor and earnestness of the Apostle: he brings into play all those powerful levers of eternal truth to move and stir your soul. He watches the first beginnings of sin and evil habits, to lop them off before they have gained strength. Many a crime has been prevented because the confessor in time directed the attention of his penitent to the fatal harvest that those inclinations of animosity would yield. And certainly there is nothing shielding more effectively marital fidelity and purity of home life, than Confession. In its first stages the powerful passion, that ruins homes and wrecks families, is checked by the earnest appeals of the confessor. Is there any better safeguard for our property than Confession? How many restitutions have been made upon the firm demand of the confessor? I know families that require no other recommendation of their servants than that they go to Confession every month. Indeed, the individual, the family, society, owe a great debt to Confession. And if some slander this institution they indeed know not what it is. Some claim it encourages vice, because it begets a false security; does it? Ah, my friend, go to Confession and see how the priest insists on a thorough contrition, on a firm resolution, on avoiding the occasions, on perfect restitution. Does that encourage sin?

My friends: If that awful misfortune of spiritual death has befallen you, if you have become an object of God's hatred, if your place in hell is mapped out for you, hasten to the confessional. Do not delay your conversion; for your days may be measured. Nothing else can destroy sin; not death, not the grave, nay, not hell itself. It is only when the hand of the priest is raised and his lips whisper the words: "I absolve" that your sin is blotted out forever. For to him was said: "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven." Remember there is an inexorable judgment awaiting you at the moment of your death: a judgment of unrelenting justice and wrath. You can forestall that sentence by a merciful sentence of pardon if you humbly subject yourself to the tribunal of peace. For what is loosed here, is loosed in Heaven, canceled for all eternity. Amen.

XXXV. THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

BY THE REV. JOHN FREELAND.

"And he said to me: Son of man, dost thou think these bones shall live? And I answered: O Lord God, thou knowest."—Ezechiel xxxvii, 3.

SYNOPSIS.—I. The resurrection founded on sacred Scripture. (a) The vision of the Prophet Ezechiel. (b) The description of the dead rising at the last day given in the Apocalypse. (c) Our Lord's words to Martha at the raising of Lazarus, and their meaning. (d) The words and the testimony of St. Paul, together with his explanation of the resurrection.

II. The resurrection is a mystery of our Faith; but a mystery is not the same thing as an impossibility. The surest fact on earth, namely our own life, is the greatest of mysteries.

III. Reason and the resurrection. (a) The tradition both of Judaism and of Christianity can not be ignored, as of no account in this matter. (b) The great desire which all have to enjoy perpetual life. Together with the creation of the desire the object of that desire has been created also. We have every reason to suppose that the Creator, who instilled into the heart of all the wish for eternal life, intended to fulfil that desire. (c) God is answerable for the firm conviction which results from the wish which He has implanted. As He has made the hope of immortality so strong within us, we can only conclude that He will fulfil that hope. (d) God is responsible for the good deeds which flow from that hope. He would not have us do good by deceiving us first of all.

IV. The doctrine of the resurrection of the body follows reasonably from that of the soul. Our desire to "meet again" those who have gone before. This "meeting again" would hardly seem a satisfactory one if we are not to meet in the flesh. Christ is the great pledge of the resurrection. He rose; so will mankind. He was the very same on Easter day, yet with differences. So shall we be at the resurrection of the dead.

The whole passage from which these words are taken is not only one of the most striking and dramatic in sacred Writ, but is, at the same time, an illustration, given to us by God Himself, of the important doctrine and truth of the resurrection of the body. The prophet was shown the bones of the dead. Stretched out before him were the mortal remains of those who at one time had walked on earth, had taken a part in its affairs, had run their course in the same manner as the rest of the members of the human race—from birth to childhood, from childhood to youth, and then, some sooner, some later, had been gathered in to "sleep with their fathers." At the command of Almighty God, these are restored to life in the sight of the prophet Ezechiel. Bone attached itself to bone; limb to

limb; part to part; and the union of parts having been completed, the body of each one stood alive, moving, strong, fitted to take once more a position, and to play its part in the affairs of the world.

Here, in miniature, we have an example of what in a more perfect degree will take place at the last day. To use the words of St. John in the Apocalypse, the dead, great and small, will stand before the throne of God. The grave will restore its prey. From the uttermost parts of the earth the scattered remains will be gathered together. The sea will give up its dead; and from whatsoever locality to which the human body had been previously consigned, and out of whatever element to which it might have eventually been assimilated, thence the all powerful hand of the Lord will bring it, to meet with its reward or its retribution.

We are, however, about to consider, not the wonderful solemnity and awe necessarily connected with a scene such as that of the resurrection of the dead, but rather, what, at the present day appears to be less and less believed in, the fact that that resurrection will indeed take place. This fact the Catholic accepts as a part of his holy faith. It is a portion of the Revelation made by the Spirit of Truth to the Church of the living God. But, even without the voice and authority of the Church in the matter, the truth of this doctrine ought to be evident to everyone acknowledging the divine authorship of sacred Scripture. "I am the resurrection and the life," said Our Lord on that occasion when He raised Lazarus from the dead. This response, for it was an answer to an assertion made by Martha, the sister of the deceased, has a force of its own. "Thy brother shall rise again" were the words He had already addressed to her. "I know that he will rise again at the last day" was the reply and this was met by a farther assertion of His, "I am the resurrection and the life;" meaning that as, through Him, and by means of His power, all will rise again at the last day, so, consequently, as He was standing there in the presence of the dead, although four days had passed away since the burial, He had only to will it and Lazarus would return to life and health. Meaning, moreover, that as the resurrection at the last day must of its very nature be a more difficult operation than that of raising to life one only recently consigned to the grave, if, as the sister had confessed, He could do the former, it must be allowed that restoration to life of one buried only four days was a comparatively easy matter.

On the subject of the resurrection of the body the Apostle St. Paul

speaks in particularly forcible language. "Behold," he says, "I tell you a mystery. We shall all indeed rise again, but we shall not all be changed. In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet shall sound and the dead shall rise again incorruptible" (I Cor. xv, 51, 52). So intent is the Apostle on driving home the truth on this great doctrine that he even stops to consider an objection. How, some will ask, can the dead rise again? In what manner? Under what conditions? And the answer is the well known comparison made between the grain of wheat and the dead body which has been laid aside. The same great Creator who causes the former to spring up into blade, and stem, and ear of corn, will also find it by no means beyond the reach of His power to make the body rise gloriously, the same indeed, and yet the same with a difference. For, just as the body of Christ, on the morning of the Resurrection, was the same as that which had been borne with so much sorrow away to the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea; just as, moreover, it possessed properties after death which before death it was without, so the body of each one of us, when risen, will be the same as that which was put away, possessing, however, properties which, under the present conditions of mortality, are unknown to us.

The Catholic Church, following in the footsteps of St. Paul, acknowledge that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead is a mystery; but a mystery is very far removed from being the same thing as an impossibility. Nothing surpasses in mystery the origin and the concrete fact of the life of each one of us. We can account only up to a certain step for the transition from nothing into something, an action which has really taken place with every unit of the human race. Nothing we most assuredly were. Most certainly two centuries ago not one particle of the construction of that which, at the present moment, goes to make up our present being can be reasonably accounted for. At some moment of time between that date and now we were made to leap the chasm which divides being from the absence of being, in which state our nothingness had found a home. What subtle power called us? Who wrought this stupendous action? What reason can throw the least ray of light in the nature of intellectual proof into the darkness which surrounds that mystery? Mystery indeed it is; but every breath we draw, and step we take, and action we perform is a sensible proof that, far from being impossible, one of the most real things of which we have any knowledge

is this very miracle by which we were brought from non-existence into the number of existing things.

Nevertheless, with regard to this mystery of the resurrection of the body the intellect is the very reverse of being silent. Reasons can be adduced to show that not only is the doctrine one which has to do with something well within the range of possibility, but, what is more, something the truth of which the thoughtful man can not refuse to acknowledge. To begin with, it is surely dangerous to brush lightly aside, as it were of no value, a belief which the most enlightened portion of humanity has held for over the space of two thousand years. The Christian holds it; the Jew holds it. But in these two names—Christian and Jew—it will be granted that we are in the presence of two great societies which have influenced, by pure intellectual thought, the whole world much more than all the rest of the nations put together. Who has made any advance upon the truth of the Unity of the Godhead, a doctrine held by the Jewish people at a time, three thousand years ago, when the remaining nations of the earth had hardly commenced to think at all? Who has improved upon the Eight Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount, in which, it might also be said the charter of the moral side of the Christian is written down and set forth? Those same societies in the midst of which originated such enlightened and such certain truths as the existence of the one, true, and living God, and all the many virtues which the Sermon on the Mount naturally suggests and inculcates, are those from which mankind has received also the doctrine of the Resurrection of the Flesh. The Jewish religion is full of the resurrection. Belief in it, and anxiety in regard to it, are frequently expressed in its liturgy, in its prayer-books. In the Talmud the very question asked by St. Paul concerning the manner in which the body will once more be recalled to life is answered in the same or very nearly the same way. An allusion is made to the grain of wheat; and a quaint reflection is made by the ancient Jewish writer to the effect that, as the wheat is consigned to the earth deprived of its husk or chaff, and then rises again with every ear properly covered, so it can hardly be looked upon as difficult for the Almighty to raise, even arrayed in garments, the human body which has been wrapped in burial clothes and thus placed in the grave. The Jews, we repeat, have believed and taught the doctrine now for so many centuries; Christians, as is well known, have acknowledged the same truth from the very commencement. Even were that doctrine

nothing but an opinion, the opinion of two vast assemblies of thinkers such as the members of these religions would constitute, can not be dismissed without some very serious argument going to prove the contrary. And such serious argument has never yet been set forth, or even attempted.

A little consideration will indeed make the truth of the belief, even from the point of pure reasoning, almost completely evident. We say almost; because it must not be forgotten that when face to face with the subject of the resurrection we are contemplating a mystery of our faith, and a mystery it would hardly be were the reason capable of either perfectly grasping it, or of completely proving it by the sole aid of the intellect alone.

The desire of living forever is one of the strongest of the desires in the human breast. Granted that at times, particularly in those of distress, of sickness, of melancholy, some are known to have expressed a wish that life were over and the end at hand, still, there is no one who, had he the offer of enjoying an existence freed from everything which makes the present life a burden, would not eagerly close at once with the offer. With extraordinary longings such indeed is the state for which all wish. The prospect of enjoying a condition where care, pain, sorrow, and any and all of the limitations of the present life are completely unknown, is one of the fairest prospects delighting the imagination. It fills the heart. It attracts the whole mind of the thinking man. It springs up spontaneously within the soul, and, having sprung up, it waters, like a fountain running over, our whole being. But God Himself instilled this strong craving after immortality. He hath made us and not we ourselves. Surely that very fact will lead us very far on the way in coming to the conclusion that an immortality is waiting ready to answer to and to fulfill the craving for which alone the creative hand of God is responsible. The infinitely wise and compassionate Maker of the human race can not be supposed to be engaged in amusing Himself at the expense of the members of the human race. But He would seem to be so engaged if the resurrection of the dead will not some day become a fact. For He and He alone, it must be repeated, is responsible for our vehement and earnest desire of immortality, and He, so we are asked to believe, having forced each one to wish, never intended to satisfy that wish? Would this be like the action of a kind and beneficent Creator? Is it, in the least, in agreement with the plan He has adopted in connection with all of

the other strong desires implanted by Himself within us? He has endowed us with no marked desire—a desire, moreover, which is universal in our species—without at the same time creating the object by means of which that desire is satisfied. Take for instance the case of hunger. The wish for food, which in all healthy persons is of a very decided nature, has certainly been given to us by Him who in the beginning made us. At the same time He created food. It exists in abundance in the world He made and over which He gave to mankind the lordship. We should consider Him to be a cruel tyrant if He had done otherwise; for the creation of the desire, we should say, supposes also the creation of the object which is to satisfy that desire. How can we then help concluding that, as He certainly has created within the human race a vehement wish for immortality, He intends in real earnestness to eventually bestow it upon us?

Then, again, consider the effects which that desire, given to us, it must be remembered, by God Himself, has had upon the generality of the human race. That wish has been "father to the thought," of immortality. So much must be said if we leave revelation out of the question and argue, as we are now doing, solely from reason. A desire coming from the Supreme Being Himself has raised within us sure and certain hopes of a future existence. Those hopes, all will acknowledge, are among the most precious dispositions of the mind and the heart. They sweeten the bitterness of the present life; they brighten the darkness caused in each one of us by serious trouble; they raise us up when we are down; they are the only support and stay in a life here below which, in the thoughts of all too many, must seem, without those hopes, not worth the living. God Himself is responsible for those hopes. He created the cause of them: He is answerable for the effects of them. We hope because we wish so ardently; but it is He who has made us wish so ardently. We lay our hopes at His feet. He made them. Can we believe that He has made them only, after all, to dash them to pieces?

That wish, those hopes, that firm persuasion of immortality has, moreover, blossomed into such beautiful effects; and then, again, we must attribute to God who is responsible for the wish to live again, which is the cause of those hopes, of this firm persuasion, and of these very effects which we may sum up in the one word Charity. Three-fourths of the kindly deeds done to alleviate the misery and the misfortunes of others owe their origin to the firm conviction in

the breast of those that do them that they shall live again. They do good to their neighbor because they recognize that such doing good is a great means of making that other life a happy one. This firm conviction, then, has brightened a hundred homes, has cured such a multitude of wounds, has harbored, and clothed, and fed so vast a number of orphans, has softened and soothed sicknesses innumerable, and given rest to untold weariness: it has paved the paths of men with acts of brotherly love, and made, by deeds of mercy, a warmer place of this world which is proverbially cold and hard hearted. God made this firm persuasion in us; for, when an infinitely wise Being is responsible for the cause, He must be held to be responsible for the effect. And the cause of this firm persuasion is that wish for the future life which the Supreme Being has imparted to each one. God made this firm persuasion of immortality within us: can it possibly be false, then? Will you make Him the author of a falsehood? Will you say that He has lured us on by false hopes to do these righteous deeds of charity? Will you say that He does evil that good may come? This, indeed, is what must be said, if there be no future life; for we have seen that He is responsible for the wish, and hopes, and firm persuasion of immortality, which themselves produce these beautiful results of kindness, and we are asked to believe that that firm persuasion, made in us by Him, is, after all, false and contrary to the reality of things. In other words, God has built up charity on the foundation of falsehood! Not so does the really reasonable man argue. He says that God can not endow us with a false conviction, and that, therefore, as the conviction of the reality of the future life comes from Him, most certain it must be that we shall live again.

Yet, after all, it is, as we have said, a question not so much of immortality in general as of the resurrection of the body in particular, with which we, at the present moment, are engaged. Nevertheless, may we not argue from the one to the other. The soul is immortal only because He who created it has determined that immortal it shall be. Its nature is immortal—true, but its nature is immortal only because the Creator has decreed that so its nature should be. The principle of life in a great many of the members of the brute creation is very similar to our own, so similar, indeed, that many of the philosophers of the twentieth century have settled down in the conviction that the principle of life in man and brute is the same. But in spite of the similarity, in spite of the likeness in nature,

the Creator has not decreed that the brute as well as man is to be immortal. The soul of man, the highest of the works of God in nature is immortal, then, only because God has so determined. But surely there is as great reason that the body should be gifted finally with immortality as there is for the souls actually now being in the possession of the same gift. The two have fought together for God and virtue. They have suffered together. They have together borne "the burden and the heat," for the sake of the kingdom of God. Why should the one receive the exceeding great reward of a happy immortality while the other is consigned to the silence of an eternal grave? What would man have ever done for the praise and the exaltation of his Creator without the body? What is it that has borne His Name to the heathen? Without the human soul, we acknowledge man could have accomplished nothing; but what could he have done for his God without the body? It is the mouth, the lips, the voice that have proclaimed the good news of the Redemption to the peoples sitting in darkness. The lips, the hands, the feet have all aided, soothed, comforted, blessed the sick and infirm. Indeed, has it not long ago passed into a proverb that the "blood of the martyrs is the seed of Christianity;" and blood without a body can not be. For God the body has been put to indescribable pains and torments; for God, in a host of cases, it has suffered hunger, thirst, weariness, "the heat by day, the frost by night;" and can we believe that God will leave that which for him was put to pain and subjected to suffering, without a reward, nay, even without recognition? Very deep, again, is the assurance and the conviction, felt by all, that, although death is the great means of separation, there will yet be a meeting of each with each on the other side of the grave. We shall meet again, are words most frequently uttered, even by the irreligious and the unbelieving, when the minutes of life may be numbered and the soul is shortly about to take its departure. But if it is the soul only with which, at some future time, we are to be brought again into contact, the idea of meeting is shorn of half its significance, and deprived of most of the consolation which it undoubtedly affords both to the mourner and the dying. The poet was voicing one of the truest instincts we have when he exclaimed: "Oh! for the touch of the vanished hand, for the sound of the voice that is still." That soul should meet soul is not sufficient for us: the eyes desire to look into eye, hand wishes once again to be interlocked in hand, face looks forward, and that with eagerness, to the day when the

face which has never ceased to be dear will gladden the heart of him or of her to whom it was, on earth, among the most precious things they looked upon. That soul and soul should meet again may afford some kind of satisfaction to the philosopher, perhaps, but mankind is not made up of philosophers—mankind is made up of very natural, very simple, people who, though they can not tell you why they feel it, yet certainly do feel that, when the forms of their dear ones have been taken from them by death, they would give all they have to see them back in their midst. This they feel. This they want. This they hope for most when they speak of meeting in the next world.

To the Christian, moreover, Our Lord Himself stands both as the pledge and as the example of the resurrection of the dead. He rose from the grave, Himself. He was, says St. Paul, the first fruits of them that slept. The Apostles would have experienced very little pleasure had they thought of the resurrection of the Divine Master as being a continuance on earth merely of His spirit. As it had been the departure of His visible presence, the sight of which had been to them for three years so sweet, which caused them such lively sorrow, so it was the real reappearance of that visible presence which, on the first Easter day, gave them such complete satisfaction and joy. Our Lord was most anxious to make them quite sure that He was risen in the flesh. He was most determined to let them see that He was clothed with that very body which had been so cruelly put to death on Mount Calvary. He was bent on making them quite certain that He was no spirit talking with them, and no mere soul going about once more in their midst. "See my hands and my feet," He said; "Come hither, Thomas, and put thy hand into my side," He said also to the doubting disciple; and, by sitting at meal with them and moving freely in and out for forty days in their company, He made it perfectly clear that His resurrection from the dead meant not only that of the soul, but that of the body as well. So is ours to be. He is the first fruits, the beginning of all of those that shall rise at the last day. Like Him we shall be the same, and, as it was with His resurrection so will it be with ours; that is, there will be sameness with difference. In His case we see the sameness from the fact that the disciples knew the Lord and recognized Him, worshiped Him, and adored Him, and were glad when they saw Him. But the difference arising from the conditions of the risen state are also manifest in the actions of the Apostles; for, at first sight the differences threw them off their

guard and made them—as, for instance, St. Mary Magdalen and the disciples going to Emmaus—inclined to confuse Him with some one else.

So will it be with us in the risen state. We shall be the very same; yet, moving in a condition of perfection such as we can not hope for here, there will be also a change, although a change for that which is "far better."

XXXVI. IS THERE A HEREAFTER?

BY THE RIGHT REV. MGR. CANON JOHN S. VAUGHAN.

"I believe in life everlasting. Amen."—The Creed.

SYNOPSIS.—The importance of the question of immortality. The proofs of the doctrine cumulative in character.

I. God has declared the existence of a future life.

II. Reason demands it, (a) that the just may be rewarded; (b) the unjust punished.

III. Intercourse with the unseen world proclaims the truth of the doctrine. Examples from the Scripture and from the lives of the saints.

IV. The universal belief of mankind—(a) Christian; (b) Jew; (c) Pagan.

V. The simplicity and immateriality of the soul a metaphysical proof.

Conclusion.—Condition in the future depends upon ourselves; therefore prepare for it.

Of all grave questions that can occupy the human mind there is none so important in itself, or so far reaching in its consequences as the question of a hereafter. Am I mortal or immortal? For me that is the question of questions—the one point to be settled before any other can be discussed. Am I like the flower, that blooms, then falls and fades forever? Or am I like an impregnable rock set in the midst of an ebbing sea, that stands itself unmoved, while all else is passing by? Does death, that destroys my fleshy envelope, destroy me? Does death's sharp dart that kills the body, pierce also the soul? I look into the future. I ponder on the eternal years. And as I am borne along on the wings of thought into periods too distant to be realized, too vast to be measured, I ask myself; shall I then be living? Thinking? Conscious still? Shall I remain, when earth, and all earth holds, has been swept away? Shall I live on through fall of stars, and crash of worlds, and the general destruction that awaits all material things; or is death an extinguisher, that puts out the flame of consciousness forever? If this world were the only theater of human life, and if nothing were to be looked for beyond it, the whole plan and basis of conduct would have to be reconstructed, and not only reconstructed, but reconstructed on totally different lines. Yes. Blot out all hope of a future, and the present loses all significance. Life assumes a different aspect, and its richest and brightest

colors fade from the landscape. Whether man be born to spend an eternity with God, or only to struggle for a few years, and then cease to be, are questions, the answers to which must determine the whole current of events.

Fortunately there is no room for doubt. In spite of the musings of certain modern materialists it is certain that man's soul shall never die. In fact, that man is made to survive the dissolution of his body is not only the most certain teaching of revelation, but it is so bound up and interwoven with thought and action and motive and conduct, that we can not remove the doctrine even in thought, without seeing the whole social fabric totter and fall to pieces, like a pack of cards.

Indeed, the strength of the Christian position, as regards an existence beyond the tomb, depends not so much on any one special proof, taken singly, however certain and sufficient it may be, as upon the accumulation of numberless proofs, all supporting and confirming one another, and creating a certainty, which is irresistible to the mind that calmly contemplates them. The hawser that holds the gigantic liner safely to the shore is composed of hundreds of minute threads of flax or hemp. No one of these, if taken singly, could hold so much as one of her loose planks or spars, but their united strength will arrest the entire ship. So it is with regard to the conjoint proofs establishing belief in a future life. Men may call in question this or that particular argument, or deem it inconclusive; but when all the proofs are focussed and united, they leave no doubt upon the inquiring mind.

We believe in God. All nature proclaims His existence. It is only the fool who says "there is no God," and even he says so, only "in his heart," and not in his mind. It is the verdict of his rebellious will, which would be free from all restraint, not his sober reason. But if God exists, then a future life must also exist. Why? Firstly, because God has clearly declared this truth. "The just shall go into everlasting glory, and the wicked into everlasting punishment." He clearly and repeatedly refers to another life, when this life is over. We are to "sit at His table" to "enter into His joy," to be "satiated with the abundance of His house," and to experience a condition of happiness, such as "eye hath not seen nor ear heard, nor mind conceived." In these and in many other passages God declares, directly or by implication, that there is to be a life beyond the tomb, of which our present life is but the preamble and the preparation.

Nor is this all. Our sense of justice and equity demands it. The

world we live in presents a strange picture to all who contemplate it. Its seething populations are composed of all sorts and conditions of men; differing as widely from one another in character and disposition as the fishes of the sea differ from one another, in size and form. The good and the wicked; the just and the unjust; the pure and the impure, mingle together in an almost inextinguishable mass; and, while evil is often exalted and crowned with honor; goodness is as often turned out of doors into the cold, and trodden under foot.

However imperfect and limited may be our acquaintance with the world, we know enough to make us keenly conscious that even-handed justice does not preside over the destinies of men, and that few receive their due, whether it be of reward or of punishment. Our whole sense of equity and fairness revolts at the scenes that both past history and present experience unfold before us. We contemplate brute strength tyrannizing over weakness, fraud and cunning triumphing over honesty and truth; and lust and greed and ambition occupying the seats of honor in the world. The early Christian martyrs were torn and rent by the fierce beasts in the public amphitheaters to afford a spectacle to dissolute and heartless pagans; noble confessors of Christ were racked and tortured and done to death, because they loved honor and truth better than life; missioners and apostolic men, who have left home and fatherland out of a pure love for souls, and an ardent desire to extend the empire of truth, have received insult for their recompense, and death for their reward! Indeed, innocence and virtue are so sure of provoking enmity and opposition, that it has become a proverb among men, as well as an inspired assurance of Holy Scripture, that all "those who will live godly, suffer persecution."

But is evil to triumph always? Are the holy and the spotless to be forever trodden under foot? Are the swords and bayonets of unchristian governments to be forever bared, to drive out defenceless religious and God-fearing priests? Will the tide of iniquity never turn? Is there no justice in heaven, no care or solicitude in the heart of God, for His own? Is there no glorious resurrection awaiting the myriads who are scourged and crucified by an impious world? Perish the thought! As sure as there is a God in heaven, so sure is it that justice will be done; the wicked punished, the just rewarded. This hope, yea, rather let me say this conviction, can not be realized here, then it must be hereafter; if not in time, in eternity. Our conscience tells us as clearly as the words of Holy Writ, that "God

will judge every man according to his works," and that He will hold the balance in His hands, and apportion to each individual his appropriate reward or punishment. It is this that we calmly await and confidently expect, knowing that though the world may tyrannize and run riot, yet "the truth of the Lord endureth forever."

Undoubtedly justice demands a future state, in which the present inequalities shall be adjusted, and in which evil doers shall be duly punished. No one believing in an infinitely powerful and in an infinitely wise God, can suppose that He will allow the holy and the loyal to remain forever unavenged, or the violators of every law and the perpetrators of every crime and infamy to go altogether unpunished. If we exercise patience now, if we witness the triumph of evil and the trials of the just, with some equanimity and without losing our peace of mind, it is simply because we look forward with unswerving trust to a day when each will stand before an impartial and irresistible Judge, who will suffer no single act of evil to go unpunished, just as He will allow no single deed of virtue to remain unrewarded.

This conviction, which is implanted within the uttermost recesses of the soul, points clearly to a life beyond the tomb, and forms one of the strands of that irresistible cord which bonds this truth to our minds.

But there are other phenomena which can be explained and accounted for only on the theory that another life follows on the heels of this. I refer especially to the intercourse which actually subsists between this world and the next. No one who has seriously examined the question will have the hardihood to deny reality to every vision and apparition that has ever been recorded; yet, even though but one were true, that one would suffice to refute the idea that at death all consciousness ceases.

Search the most sacred and best authenticated records, and we shall meet innumerable instances of the dead appearing to the living. The Scriptures themselves are full of them; take, for instance, the account given by the Evangelist St. Matthew (chap. xvii), of the transfiguration. Not only did Our Lord appear, raised in the air, and wholly transformed, so that His face shone like the sun, and His garments became white as snow; but there were seen "talking with him Moses and Elias," the two great patriarchs, who during their earthly career had worked such wonders among the chosen people of God.

Both Moses and Elias had lived their brief life on earth; but it was many centuries before the birth of Christ. During all these ages their bones had lain buried, and generations had come and gone, while little more than the bare memory of their names survived them. Yet now they appear again. Now they revisit, for a brief moment, the scenes of their former life, and are clearly seen and recognized holding intercourse with our blessed Lord. Here there is striking and unmistakable evidence that the dead still live, and that those who have passed beyond human observation, to the land of spirits, are still existing full of health and strength.

Think of the centuries that had rolled by, between the period when Pharao's daughter discovered the infant Moses in a cradle among the rushes, and the date at which the incarnate Son of God was born in the stable of Bethlehem. Yet during all these centuries the soul of the great leader of Israel was evidently fully conscious and palpitating with life.

But to such instances as these may be added countless others, recorded in the lives of the saints. Among the many thousands of those whose lives have been written, and whom the Church holds up to our veneration, there are few who have not had intercourse with the invisible world of departed souls. They have seen the forms and heard the voices of those who, years before, had passed away. Not only the Blessed Virgin, but St. Joseph, and St. Peter, and multitudes of others have appeared to men on earth and communicated with them in familiar language. Those who have been favored with such supernatural visions were persons of exceptional virtue and exceptional honesty. No one will dare to say that they were all either deceivers or deceived. Their united testimony, extending to all times and to almost all countries, can hardly be set aside or denied by even the most sceptical. These occurrences have been too numerous, too circumstantial, too universal, and too remarkable in their effects, to be ascribed in every case to hallucination, fraud, or deceit. Yet, if it be granted that but one such apparition be genuine, it must be admitted that a life exists beyond the tomb, and that death that destroys the body has no power over the soul.

Another argument is founded upon the universal belief of all mankind. Not only the most highly civilized, but also the most illiterate and barbarous have clung to this belief. Among uncivilized tribes and savages the doctrine is often found disfigured by gross superstitions and false accretions, but it is clearly recognizable. They

realize that the spirits of their ancestors are still abroad. They bury food and weapons with the corpses of their deceased relatives, that they may be nourished and armed on their passage to the nether world. They even invoke the spirits of the departed, and seek to appease their anger or to secure their friendship by gifts; they attempt to call them up, and profess, in many cases, to hold communication with them. In these and in many other ways they bear witness to the universality of the belief in a future world, to which the dead are transported. They have disfigured and marred this belief by surrounding it with innumerable absurdities and incongruous fables, but such accretions in no way interfere with the fact that they, like all other men, whether cultured or uncultured, whether savage or civilized, agree in the general statement that man does not wholly perish, and that the dread destroyer of the material organs has no power over the soul that uses them. Now what all men hold as certain, must repose upon some very solid foundation. The verdict of the entire race is undoubtedly true. Why? Because its very universality shows that it is ingrained in our very nature. And how did it establish itself there, but by the impress of Him, who created it, and made it what it is. As we all possess a consciousness of right and wrong, so we all possess a consciousness of a future, when the dictates of this very conscience will be vindicated. To what purpose indeed would this inward monitor be given to us, if obedience and disobedience to its dictates resulted in the same consequences. No; our conscience not only declares one act to be just and another to be unjust, but it warns us of the future consequences of any violation of its teaching, and points to a future retribution. Its very existence implies a future state in which the supreme Legislator will "render to every man according to his works."

Further, it may be observed, that the answers to prayers addressed to the saints, are wholly inexplicable, and indeed inconceivable, except on the supposition that they are still rejoicing somewhere in the presence of God. We are taught, not only to honor the glorious servants of God, but to seek their help and protection. We address our petitions to them, and innumerable are the favors that we receive from their hands in return. There is scarcely any devout Catholic, but has been made sensible, at one or another period of his life, of the power of their friendship; while the lives of the saints are full of the most remarkable instances of the succor they have received from such heavenly visitors, in times of peril and of trial. No one

can read the accounts of St. Ignatius the Bishop, St. Polycarp, St. Perpetua, St. Cyprian, to take a few instances, without realizing that the departed have not ceased to be, but have only changed their environment.

This intercourse between the inhabitants of the present world and those of the next, so constantly alluded to in the biographies of holy men and women, affords additional testimony in support of our contention, while even the experiences of the so-called spiritualists, and others, who, in spite of ecclesiastical prohibitions and repeated denunciations, carry on unlawful communication with deceased friends—serves, in spite of its unlawfulness—to add at least some further weight to this dogma of the Church.

Another set of arguments come to us from the study of metaphysics. It has been clearly demonstrated by psychologists that the soul is a simple or indivisible substance; spiritual in its nature; and not intrinsically dependent on the body for its existence, or even for its action. Now, such a substance is incapable of corruption, either directly or indirectly. It is obviously incapable of corruption *directly,* since it is not made up of distinct parts, and can not therefore be resolved into anything else, as, for instance, water may be resolved into two gases. But it is likewise incapable of corruption or distribution even *indirectly,* for it does not intrinsically depend on the body for its being, as the whiteness of the snow-flakes depends upon the snow, and must vanish as soon as the particle in which it adheres is melted by the warmth. Hence the human soul can not come to an end in either of these ways.

From this it is apparent that its immortality is one of the consequences of its immateriality. Were the human intellect but a simple product of certain nervous processes, or a mere function of the gray matter of the brain (as has foolishly been alleged), then, of course, the dissolution of the organism would necessarily mean the total annihilation of the soul. But since sound philosophy proves this not to be the case, the soul must live on, after the organism has perished.

These are, however, considerations to which it is impossible to do justice, except in a lecture-room, and to students already versed in the subtleties of philosophy, and a preacher would justly be blamed for pedantry, who should do more than just point out in passing the existence of such proofs. To any among you, dear brethren, who may be interested in the metaphysical aspect of the momentous

question, the ordinary recognized treatises lie ready and open, and may easily be consulted.

Taking, then, man's future life as sufficiently established, we will devote the short time remaining to us, to the consideration of a more practical and pressing question. We shall inquire whether we are making as serious a preparation for that eternal future as it deserves.

The future that awaits us is eternal. In that one respect, at least, it is the same for all. But when we pass in review the precise state and condition of the individual soul, that has "entered into the house of its eternity," and contemplate its occupations, its aspirations, its feelings and emotions, the utmost discrimination must be exercised. "The just," says the Infinite Judge, "shall go into everlasting glory, and the wicked into everlasting punishment." But among both the just and the unjust, there exist innumerable degrees of holiness or of infamy. As there are different positions in God's kingdom—"in my Father's house there are many mansions," so there are also different positions in the region of the damned. As even those who are saved, will nevertheless differ from one another, even "as star differeth from star in glory," so, in like manner, will the lost differ from one another in the measure of their shame and in the intensity of their agony.

As no two human beings possess exactly the same form and cast of features, so there are probably no two in heaven or in hell, whose lives on earth have quite corresponded, or who have merited precisely the same fate. In every sin, as well as in every act of virtue, there are circumstances and surroundings wholly personal and peculiar, which will differentiate every act of vice or virtue, from every other.

We must not then rest satisfied, dear brethren, to save our souls, nor flatter ourselves that we have done enough, when we have secured a place in our Father's home. We should rather dwell upon the fact that time is given that we may turn it to account, and that we must never cease to advance and to struggle forward, upward, and onward, with persevering energy and resolution, so long as life lasts.

Did we but realize the priceless value of every moment of time, we should be far more careful than we are not to squander the flying minutes, each one of which is a seed, big with the promise of eternal fruit.

XXXVII. HEAVEN.

BY THE REV. BERTRAND L. CONWAY, C.S.P.

"Dearly beloved, we are now the sons of God; and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be. We know that when he shall appear, we shall be like to him, because we shall see him as he is."—I John iii, 2.

SYNOPSIS.—Introduction.—The Scriptures speak of heaven to comfort us in our sorrows, to remind us of our brief earthly pilgrimage and to incite us to persevere. Impossible to describe its joys. Impossible to St. Paul and St. John. The imagery of the Apocalypse not a real description. Useless for us to pry into the details of its joy.

I. The Beatific Vision. Reason can prove immortality and the fact of a future reward. Revelation alone can tell us of the supernatural fact of the Beatific Vision. We see God by the light of glory. We see not only the glorified humanity of Christ, but the divine essence. We see all things in God, and from His divine viewpoint. In this life we see traces of God's goodness, truth and beauty. A foretaste of the perfect vision of God—not a mere contemplation, but a perfect satisfaction of every faculty of man's being.

II. Perfect and eternal happiness. Happiness in this life always imperfect and fleeting. Sin banished in heaven, and with it all the evils that follow in its train—labor, sorrow, sickness and death. A place of perfect rest. The Scriptures speak of degrees of merit, according to our works. There is no possibility of ennui, because (1) The object of our longing is infinite; and (2) God sustains us that we, made like to Him, never know fatigue.

Peroration.—The true lover (1) thinks constantly of the beloved; (2) longs ardently for her presence, and (3) is willing to do all things for her. Love should therefore be the object of all our striving, and heaven the goal in view.

The Word of God, in both the Old Testament and the New, speaks unceasingly of the perfect and lasting happiness which God has prepared for His faithful servants. The joys of the kingdom of heaven are insisted upon by prophet, apostle, and the Saviour Himself, to comfort us in our struggles and sorrows, to remind us of the brief duration of our earthly pilgrimage, to incite us to persevere faithfully until the end, that we might win our reward exceedingly great. "I reckon that the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be reckoned with the glory to come" (Rom. viii, 18). "We have not here a lasting city, but we seek one that is to come" (Heb. xiii, 14). "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee

the crown of life" (Apoc. ii, 10). "Your reward is very great in heaven" (Matt. v, 1). "They shall be inebriated with the plenty of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of thy pleasure" (Ps. xxv, 10).

It is impossible for any mortal to describe adequately the happiness of heaven. The apostles on Thabor who saw the Saviour transfigured with the glory of His Father's kingdom "fell upon their faces and were very much afraid" (Matt. xvii, 6). St. Paul, the greatest genius the religious world ever knew, although vouchsafed a vision of paradise, could only marvel at its beauty, and be silent (II Cor. xii, 4). He knew that its happiness far surpassed the dreams of the brightest intelligence, or the hopes of the most loving heart. "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God had prepared for them that love Him" (I Cor. ii, 9). St. John the Beloved pictures heaven with "its gates of pearl, its streets of pure gold, its foundations of all precious stones, its light of the glory of God" (Apoc. xxi, 19-23), and yet his imagery in no way pretends to give a real account of the beauty of God's house.

When the greatest of God's saints tell us clearly that God has not chosen to reveal to us the details of our future life and work in eternity, it is idle for us to pry into the secrets of God. We can not know any more than God is pleased to unfold.

We should be perfectly content when the apostle tells us: "It doth not yet appear what we shall be." How we shall know God and love Him for all eternity, how we will carry on converse with the angels and the saints, how we will feel toward our friends or relatives who have not won their crown, how we shall be perfectly and eternally happy—these are questions for the future. We are like men regarding the reverse side of a beautiful tapestry, and seeing nothing but an unmeaning medley of numberless stitches and knots. But we know that if we are faithful to the end, we will one day behold the beautiful design, of God's own framing, on the other side of the fabric.

But as in every other mystery of Christianity, the hereafter with its obscurity and darkness is also a revelation of truth and light. As St. John tells us: In heaven "we shall see God face to face, and be like to him."

The essential joy of the blessed in heaven consists in seeing God face to face and loving Him perfectly through all eternity—in en-

joying with the purest and most perfect happiness the Beatific Vision. "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God" (Matt. v, 8). "We see now through a glass in a dark manner, but then face to face" (I Cor. xiii, 12).

Human reason of itself can prove the sanction of reward and punishment in the after life. It can demonstrate that the soul does not end with the body, but lives an immortal life of blessing or of curse, according as it has kept or broken the law of God. But the revealed joy of the Beatific Vision is far above the happiness due our human nature. It is a purely supernatural gift of God. "Eternal life," says the apostle, "is a grace of God" (Rom. vi, 23). It makes us "fellow citizens with the saints, domestics of God, joint heirs with Christ, sharers in the glory of his throne, his eternal friends" (Eph. ii, 19; Rom. viii, 17; Apoc. iii, 21; John xiv, 2). No truth is plainer in the Scriptures than the invisibility of the Uncreated Deity. We have no right by our mere human nature to see God face to face. "No man hath seen God at any time" (Jo. i, 18). "God inhabiteth light inaccessible, whom no man hath seen nor can see" (I Tim. vi, 16). When Moses of old desired to see the glory of God, Jehovah told him that to see God face to face was not given to man in this life. "Thou canst not see my face; for no man shall see me and live" (Ex. xxxiii, 20; Cf. Deut. iv, 12; I Jo. iv, 12).

St. John tells us that to see God there must needs be some marvelous supernatural change in us. If we are to look not merely upon Our Lord's glorified humanity but to view the Divine Essence itself, we must become "partakers of the Divine Nature" (II Peter i, 4), we must "be like to him" (I Jo. iii, 2).

This supernatural quality or special divine operation whereby our minds are enlarged, purified and strengthened to enjoy the glory of the divine nature instead of being overwhelmed by its majesty, is called by the Church the *light of glory*. It is the culminating grace of the thousands that God showers upon His children from the time He first gave them the divine help to believe and to hope. It is the eternal grace of the love of God which will endure for ever, when the faith that acknowledged it, and the hope that longed for it shall be no more.

Even in this life we can see everywhere around us the traces of the beauty, the goodness and the truth of the most high God. How many have realized his *beauty* when they saw the sun rise glorious

at dawn from the top of the snow-capped mountains, or descend in ruddy glow tipping the surrounding clouds with all the colors of the rainbow? How many have felt His *goodness* when in their hour of contentment they have thanked Him for the blessing of a true wife, a grateful child, a faithful friend, a sorrowful Confession, a loving Communion? How many have received a glimpse of His eternal *truth,* when they entered the haven of the Church Catholic after the storms of error and unbelief, and learned to love the wisdom of God in a St. Paul, a St. John, a Francis de Sales, or a Philip Neri?

And yet these were only "glimpses through a glass," as the apostle calls them. They were merely the glimmering rays of beauty, goodness and truth which shone from on high through the thick mists of this world's error and sin.

In the kingdom of heaven we shall no longer see Him by means of His word and works, as revealed in the universe, the Bible, the Church and the saints, but we shall gaze into the Divine Essence itself, and see, as in a spotless mirror, created things, and the eternal truths. We will begin to fathom—and all eternity will not suffice for the task—the impenetrable depths of the mysteries of God—the trinity, the incarnation, the redemption, the love, the mercy, the justice, the power, the eternity of God. We shall then learn the reason of suffering and labor, we shall realize the mercy of eternal punishment, we shall see the wisdom of the marvelous distribution of God's graces—in a word, we shall be perfectly happy in viewing all things from the viewpoint of God.

Some non-Catholic writers have ridiculed what they call the scholastic concept of heaven. Just as Mohammed, they say, pictured a sensual paradise, or the pagans framed gods after their own image and likeness, so the medieval schoolmen, addicted wholly to contemplation, made the happiness of heaven consist solely in the joy of intellectual contemplation.

But such an objection at once proves that these men have never taken the trouble to read any of the authors they despise on mere traditional prejudice. For Catholic theologians of the Middle Ages and to-day point out carefully that the Beatific Vision implies not merely the perfect satisfaction of the intellect but also the perfect satisfaction of the will; not merely the perfection of the soul, which becomes like to God, but also of the body which becomes like the body of the risen Christ (I Cor. xv), not merely a dry

thinking about God, but the perfect possession of God for all eternity by every faculty of man.

What do we mean by *seeing* a friend? We go to see him because we love him, and enjoy the pleasure of his company. Should that love turn to hatred, his very presence becomes distasteful and a positive pain to us. So the devout soul sees God because it loves God perfectly, and finds its perfect contentment in His eternally blessed presence. For the same reason the unrepentant sinner, dying in the voluntary hatred of God, finds God's presence a positive pain, and shuns it forever in the despair of hell.

The soul possessed of the Beatific Vision is necessarily blessed with a perfect and eternal happiness.

There is an innate longing in every soul for happiness, because God has created it for Himself. Too often man seeks it where it can not be found. In seeking to build his palace of happiness, he generally lays the foundation in the riches of the world, which seem at first sight able to procure every desire of the human heart. On this foundation he erects every kind of sensual and intellectual pleasure; love, friendship, health, the pride of place, the glory of this world, the honor and respect of his fellows. Has he attained true happiness? By no means, for in one day the whirlwind of misfortune overturns his palace of pleasure and buries him in its ruins.

Has he acquired a fortune of millions? He is robbed of it in one day's wild speculation, or his health is so shattered that his life is nothing but a living death. Has he a happy and peaceful family? In one day, the devil enters that household, and lo! a loving wife becomes untrue, a daughter marries a worthless scoundrel, or a son becomes a drunkard. Has he many friends? In time of need they desert him and sell his friendship, like Judas, for thirty pieces of silver. Is he honored by the world with its highest places of trust? One false step, and those that yesterday shouted their hosannas, will be the first to clamor for his undoing.

Indeed every new desire of the heart that is satisfied is merely the beginning of another that craves satisfaction. We are like the traveler that for the first time attempts to climb the summit of a very high mountain. After great stress of labor he has reached a rugged height only to find himself encased in a prison of great walls. On and on he goes to what he deems the topmost peak, but on reaching it he finds that there are others higher still. Down

again he climbs to ascend once more, only to be again deceived. What a true picture of the lives of men.

In heaven every true desire shall find its perfect satisfaction, and every evil shall cease to exist forever more. There will be perfect rest and peace for body and soul. The poor "shall no more hunger and thirst, neither shall the sun fall on them, nor any heat" (Apoc. vii, 16). The sick and sorrowing shall be strong and happy, for "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more" (Apoc. xxi, 4). The curse of sin and the dark night of struggle and temptation shall disappear, for "there shall be no curse any more, and night shall be no more" (Apoc. xxii, 3-5). The devil's power will be utterly broken, the flesh will no longer rebel against the spirit, the world of wicked men and women will be utterly forgotten.

How often did the eyes of the martyrs dying for Christ in the midst of most cruel torments pierce behind the veil, to take comfort in the peace of the City of God! How often have the noblest of the saints been wrapped in ecstasy as they "beheld the glory of the Lord with open face" (II Cor. iii, 18). How often a weary pilgrim in this valley of tears has struggled on despite the bitterest temptations toward the rest of his father's house? "One drop of this happiness," a great saints tells us, "if it fell into hell, would at once convert the misery of the damned into joy and delight." "Blessed indeed are they that dwell in thy house, O Lord. They shall praise thee forever and ever" (Ps. lxxxiii, 5), "they shall be inebriated with the plenty of thy house, and thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of thy pleasure; for with thee is the fountain of life, and in thy light we shall see light" (Ps. xxxv, 9, 10).

It is, however, the teaching of the Council of Florence that although all the blessed shall be perfectly happy, still everyone shall be rewarded according to their degree of merit. Nothing is more clearly taught in the sacred Scriptures. Our Saviour tells us that "he will render to every man according to his works" (Matt. xvi, 27). It seems natural to suppose that the saint who practices the heroic self-denial of a St. Paul, or the heroic poverty of St. Francis Assisi, will obtain more glory before the throne of God, than that simple good housewife who saves her soul, after yielding many and many a time to worldliness. "He who soweth spar-

ingly shall also reap sparingly; and he who soweth in blessings shall also reap blessings" (II Cor. ix, 6).

Protestants as a rule deny this, on account of their false teaching on merit, and the efficacy of good works. They also appeal to the parable of the householder (Matt. xx, 1-16). But Our Saviour merely wished to bring out the fact "that the reward of eternal life corresponds not to the length of time a man has labored, but to the work he has accomplished" (Maldonatus). Our Saviour had in mind the Jews, who proud of their position as God's chosen people were murmuring now that he was putting the alien Gentiles on the same footing as themselves. The question of the quality or inequality of reward in an after life is not even hinted at.

Another common difficulty of to-day is the doubt that seems to arise even in the minds of some Christians: Will not the joys of heaven be fruitful of languor and ennui? They picture the blessed as immersed in mere dreamy contemplation, or chanting in dull monotonous round the praises of God.

But is it not altogether unreasonable to suppose that the Infinite Intelligence, Beauty and Love could fail to satisfy the aspirations and longings of our minds and hearts? As well say that we could exhaust the ocean by drinking its waters, as dream of exhausting the treasures of eternal happiness that God has prepared for us.

It is perfectly true that pleasure produces satiety in this life, but that can readily be accounted for. Sinful pleasure eventually causes disgust and ennui, for our hearts were made for something higher and nobler; intellectual pleasure is often so exacting in its demands that it wearies us exceedingly, just as the body becomes fatigued from too much physical exercise.

But in heaven no unhappiness is possible, because sin, the origin of it, is absolutely banished. "There shall not enter into it anything defiled" (Apoc. xxi, 27). No weariness or ennui is possible, because God gives us the sustaining help of His own infinite power and love. All the desires of mind and will and heart will be eternally gratified. Why, then, question, simply because we can not form an adequate concept of the manner in which God will satisfy them.

Sursum Corda be your motto, then, beloved brethren. Lift up your hearts to the glory and happiness that await you in the palace of the King. The true lover thinks constantly of the beloved. It was the thought of the plenty in his father's house that first

roused the prodigal to a sense of his degradation. It was the vision of paradise that changed Saul, the persecutor of the Christians, into Paul, the great lover of Jesus Christ.

The true lover longs ardently for the presence of the beloved, "As the hart panteth after the fountains of water, so their souls pant after God" (Ps. xli, 1, 2). The desire "to be dissolved, and to be with God" (Phil. i, 23) has ever burned in the hearts of patriarchs, prophets and apostles. They knew that nothing but God could give true rest and peace to their souls; that their longing for truth, goodness, beauty and love was too intense to be satisfied by aught created, that this life was but an imperfect, humdrum existence, unless its motive was divinized by the glory of the life to come. Death to God's true servants is merely a door into their Father's house, a gate into the King's city. Sickness, sorrow and labor are merely the passports for entrance.

The true lover is willing to do all things for the beloved. The faithful follower of Christ finds every burden easy, because love spurs him on. He knows that "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent bear it away" (Matt. xi, 12). He knows that the one who hateth his life in the world keepeth it unto life eternal (Jo. xii, 25). He knows that "through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God" (Acts xiv, 22). No sacrifice is too great, no sorrow too bitter, no labor too trying, no poverty too burdensome, no temptation too vehement—all are gladly accepted as crosses, needed to win the crown incorruptible (I Cor. ix, 25).

With love as the motive, and the kingdom of God as the end of your striving, let the world's standards alone. Men may pity you for your ill health, look down upon you for your poverty, and avoid you for your over great sorrow, "esteeming your life madness, and your death without honor," but God "has numbered you among his children, and your lot will be eternal happiness among his saints" (Wisdom v, 4, 5).

XXXVIII. PURGATORY.

BY THE REV. JOHN FREELAND.

SYNOPSIS.—I. Our Lord's earnestness in preaching a state of perfection. The difficulty of the means, laid down by Him, for attaining that state. The fact is that hardly any one does practice those means. Christ means them to be carried out. Heaven can not be entered without perfection. As that perfection is not attained here it follows that some place must exist, on the other side of the grave, where, previously to entering heaven, we are made perfect.

II. Consider the sinner who dies after a whole life spent in sin. He repents at the last. It is admitted by all that repentance, even at the last moment, delivers the sinner from hell. But will he go straight to heaven? Is it reasonable? At once will he go about in close companionship with the most holy, such as our blessed Lord and Our Lady?

III. Consider that heaven is held out as a reward for loving service. With that consider the state of modern society. No reason to think of its sins. Consider its negligences. The universal forgetfulness of Christ; complete absorption in this life. No one wants heaven for its own sake. at most, it is wanted because men can not live here always. Love of this life, and forgetfulness of Christ form a second nature. How is that to be changed into love of heaven and great fondness for Christ? Will this be done in a moment? Would it be any satisfaction to Christ if, by a miracle, in a moment He brought it about? A forced love is hardly worth the having.

IV. Purgatory is the school of love.

V. Would heaven, which we had done nothing to gain, be looked at as a reward by the honorable? Should we not feel ashamed, confused by being in the company of those who had borne even persecution, while we had attempted nothing for Christ. Would not the "Well done, good and faithful servant" seem to us the perfection of sarcasm as we recollect, supposing we have gone straight to heaven, that we were not good, not faithful, not the servant of Christ at all? Would not such considerations make us, of our own selves, approach Christ and even ask to be sent away to be prepared; so that heaven might be, in some sense, of our own gaining, and the word of Christ "Well done" be at least to some extent true?

Few things in the New Testament are so remarkable as the great stress which Our Lord lays upon what he describes as being perfect, and the very difficult means which He holds out for the attainment of that state. The young man who, on one occasion, approached Him with the desire to follow Him whithersoever He went, had, according to his own assertion, kept the Commandments from his youth up; but this was not sufficient for Christ. "If thou wilt be perfect," He replied, "go sell all that thou hast and give it to the poor, and then come, follow me." The state of

perfection is the following of Christ; that is to say, it consists in the performance of those holy actions of which in His own life He set the example. It consists in undergoing the sufferings and the privations of life in the same spirit as that in which Our Lord underwent His. He that will be the perfect disciple is to take up his cross, and that daily; he is to be ready to lose his life for the sake of Christ; he is to prefer poverty to wealth; meekness, chastity, peacefulness, and even persecution, to any one of their opposites. He is to be another Christ. Such a state as this is the one which Our Lord has shown us He wishes us to endeavor to attain to, and how earnestly He wishes it can be seen from the words uttered by Him after the enumeration of some of the things above mentioned as constituting perfection, the words namely, "Be ye perfect, even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect."

But it will be acknowledged that the means laid down by the Saviour of the world would, were they carried out, be very hard to bear. Indeed, it is because of the large amount of pain which they entail that by far the greater part of the adherents to Christianity either never dream of submitting to them, or, in case they are obliged to do so, they rebel, and, so soon as they are able, endeavor to escape them. Who does sell all he has and bestow it on the poor? Or, if smitten upon the right cheek, offers the other to be smitten? Or, to the person stealing his cloak, offers, in addition, his coat? Or suffers injury without seeking redress, or persecution without murmuring, or takes the daily cross as a blessing which should be welcomed and cherished rather than as an affliction to be got rid of at the first opportunity? Did Christ never mean, then, that the state of perfection which He so often exhorts us to try to reach should really be striven for by us? After all He has said on the matter, are we, then, quite as perfect without complying with the conditions He has laid down, as we should be were we to have taken Him seriously at His word? Who will for one moment either say so or think so? Who will not say that Christ counseled this state of perfection because He thought it necessary that we should attain to it. He was not one of those who talk for the sake of talking. He never gave advice which was not really required. On no occasion does He present Himself as a person who would set before us a course of life, and, at the same time, would lead us to understand that the same purpose is answered whether we follow out that course or leave it alone. What, then, are we to

conclude? It can not be denied that exceedingly few indeed ever dream of putting the advice of Our Lord into practice; in other words the vast majority of persons prefer not to become sufficiently perfect for entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

What, we repeat, are we to conclude from this? Perfection is necessary. We can not hope for heaven without we first of all attain to that perfection. What are we, then, to conclude from this, excepting that after death some place must exist where the attainment of that perfection will not be left to us, as it is here, but where God Himself will prepare us, will make us ready, will perfect us, so as to render us fitted to dwell near to Him in the kingdom of heaven for eternity?

But our sojourn here on earth is not only one in which we refuse to become as perfect as our divine Master would have us be, but, more than this, the greatest imperfections are with us the order of the day, and by a great many, very serious sins are committed. Can it really be a fact that the soul of the sinner is, at the moment of death, at once, without the least preparation, to enjoy the felicity of paradise; at once to be admitted into that place which is a reward for perfection and sinlessness? Consider the case of very many who leave this world after the commission of much the very opposite of righteousness—one moment grievous sinners, the next face to face with their Judge. They have been taken away to the next world laden with iniquity, burdened with defects, bearing upon their souls the result of many misdemeanors. From their youth up no prayers have been said, no church frequented, no interest taken in the affairs of God, but, most likely, a very sad interest taken in those things which tell against God and which frustrate His divine plans. At the last only, when almost in the very arms of death, they have expressed sorrow for the sinful life. An act of contrition has been made. Pardon for the wayward career has been asked. What is to become of such a one? Is he to be punished for evermore? Is the expression of sorrow of no avail, the "God be merciful to me a sinner" without some beneficial effect? It is a received doctrine among Christians that, at whatsoever moment, early or late, even at the very latest, the sinner returns to his God, he will be forgiven and will not be punished eternally: "Living he shall live, and he shall not die, saith the Lord." But shall he go straight to heaven, then? At once, he whose soul has been, up to the last moment, saturated, blotched, blurred, defiled with sin,—at once

is such a one to walk the courts of heaven as a familiar friend of angels, of saints, of our Blessed Lady, of Our Lord; is he at once to be in close companionship with that God of whom we are told that nothing defiled shall enter into His sight? Can we believe it? Would it be fair to the saints, if such were indeed the case? To them who in their lifetime really did bear the burdens and the heats for the sake of Christ; who were pure not only in their character, but who had purified their soul with pain; who ran their course, who kept the faith, who fought the good fight—would the immediate entrance, without some preparation, into heaven, on the part of the repentant wicked be just to such as these?

Or, consider again the fact, evident in every one of the pages of the New Testament, that heaven is held out by Christ only to those who are engaged in actively serving Him; a service, moreover, which is to comprise a real love of and fondness for Him—consider that fact side by side with what is the general feature of society in all of its grades at the present time—the absence of actual service of Christ and universal forgetfulness of Him. There is no need to think about sin in this consideration; it is quite sufficient to point to the unfittedness of the majority of people for heaven, where they are to dwell eternally with Christ, from the sole reason that neither the one nor the other ever enters, in the least degree, into their thoughts or their actions. There on the one hand is Our Lord longing to have each one of us with Him in heaven; on the other hand there are the members of the human race who have no wish to get there, unless, perhaps, in quite a secondary way. At the same time as Christ is counting the moments when the days of our pilgrimage are over, we, far from looking upon our seeing and being with Him in the same anxious and impatient manner, are counting on reaching the place He has gone beforehand to prepare for us only as an alternative. We regret we can not live here always; but as we feel confident that that is an impossibility, well then, of course, we prefer eternal happiness to a state of eternal discomfort, or, worse still, misery. There is no sighing for heaven and Christ in the same manner as that so beautifully mentioned by the royal prophet: "For thee my heart and my flesh have fainted away." This is surely a state of mind quite unfitted for the immediate possession of the reward which Christ is said to have in store only "for them that love Him." Our state of mind is altogether in favor of the present life. We need not, we repeat, consider the matter of sin; without introducing sin

into the subject at all, it must be clear to most that, with the majority of people the thoughts of the mind, the turn of the disposition, the bent of the inclination are toward this earth. Life here has become a second nature to us. But is that second nature to be changed at once so soon as the breath is out of our body? God and Christ will certainly not have us with them unless we so desire, and, as the being with them is to last forever, we must want to be with them as vehemently as They want to be with us. Perfect love of them must take possession of us before we enter heaven. But it is idle to deny that most Christians hardly ever *think* of these Divine Persons, to say nothing about having the sentiment of perfect love of them. And this from the cradle to the grave. It is the state of mind of society at the present moment. As they have lived in that state, so they die in it. We pass away with the thoughts and the cares and the conditions of the mode of life here below intertwined with our whole being. All during that which the Patriarch calls the pilgrimage of our days on this earth the great person with whom we are to spend eternity stands more or less in the last position within our affections, and, too often, and with most, is clean forgotten. quite out of mind, like one, as the prophet puts it, "dead from the heart;" *mortuus ex corde.* A change surely must come over the whole disposition of a man before he can settle down to enjoy the delights of close companionship with Christ, the "Lover of his soul." And that change must surely be, to some extent, brought about by our own selves. If as by a miracle, at the moment of our departure hence, the Son of God should work a complete change in our frame of mind, in our habit of thought, in the aspirations of our heart, so that we should drop off all considerations of the world below as we disuse an old garment, and be inflamed with the love of our Master with so warm a fire that even all the loves of the earth would be burnt and consumed away by it; if Christ wrought an instantaneous change in us, what satisfaction would such a love be to Him? He loves us; but He desires our love in return; but, then, who cares about a love which is caused by some spell and which, not issuing spontaneously out of the breast of the beloved, is a sentiment merely produced by the mighty act of a mightier mind? It would be very little consolation to the King of heaven throughout the ages of eternity, were He to be able to review the souls of the blessed in heaven, and only be allowed to say of an overwhelming majority of them: "They love me because, in a moment, I *made* them

do so. They were never schooled in love for me. On the earth where they might, and should, have learned that lesson I was hardly ever thought of by them. In the twinkling of an eye I forced them to love me." Not so does affection, which is in the least degree worth having, come for a person who has previously never been cared for, never considered, altogether out of mind. It takes time. It comes by a gradual process. And that gradual process of learning to love Christ in such a manner that the sentiment may be said to be ours, and not one that He has forced upon us, will not take place in heaven, since "a process of learning" is another way of saying a state of preparation, and heaven is not preparation but the reward held out to the ready and prepared. But if the place of preparation is not heaven itself, and, as we have presumed earth has passed away, where can the preparation take place if there be no purgatory?

For whatever else may or may not be said of purgatory, one of the things, and one of the chief things which must be said of it, is that it is the school of love. It is there that, step by step, we rise to the gaining of that perfect fondness for Christ, which the best of us, even, hardly attain to here, and from which most of us are removed even to the extreme of coldness, such is our forgetfulness of Him and of His claims. "Depart from me" He will say to the soul when, in death, it meets Him. "Depart; but not forever. Depart into the outer darkness, although not to remain there always. Day by day you shall now learn the lesson which you should have learned on earth. It will not be done in a moment, or without your feeling something on account of it; for all learning is a gradual process, and no lesson is perfectly known unless it cause inconvenience, sometimes great pain, in the acquisition. But learn to love you shall. You shall then return to me, and stay and dwell with me where *you* will have the satisfaction of being completely happy, and where *I* shall have the satisfaction of knowing that you love me, your God, not because I, in one moment forced you to do so, but, because, to some extent you acquired that love yourself. Learn it, that is, in a place where the very separation from me itself increased your longing for heaven and me as the hart thirsteth for the water brooks; in purgatory, namely, where absence from me became like a load upon your heart weighing you down, and the thoughts of me, and desire for me, brought tears to the eyes of your soul."

Finally, our own feelings of self respect and of honor should incline us to admit the existence of a place of preparation and of purification before heaven can be entered. Every one will agree that in heaven the finest and truest ideas of honor and of equity will rule in the minds of all. That there could be admitted in that place anything but the finest sentiments of our nature is itself a supposition which even the wicked would ridicule. But could the honorable man support heaven for one moment, constantly, continually, eternally fraternizing with those who had worked, suffered, struggled, to obtain that reward, for which if there were no state of preparation he himself would have done and suffered nothing? Would he not find it difficult indeed to be at his ease were he placed in the same position, awarded the same honors, raised to the same level, given exactly the same delights, the signs of his Saviour's love, as those who really had done and submitted to something while he could not pretend to having made even one small effort? He did nothing; he knew that he had done nothing; Christ, too, knew that he did nothing. No honorable man, we repeat, could support such a state. His whole heart and mind would plead to Christ for a purgatory. He would ask to be sent away from heaven, for a time, to a place of preparation. Then he could come back, and could feel like the rest that he had won his crown by some kind of personal effort. Then the words of Christ would be deprived of their sting and it would be truthfully said "Well done," and "Good," and "Faithful Servant."

XXXIX. HELL.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JAMES BELLORD, D.D.

"The iniquity of the house of Israel and of Judah is exceeding great. . . . The city is filled with perverseness, for they have said: the Lord hath forsaken the earth and the Lord seeth not. Therefore neither shall my eye spare, nor will I have pity: I will requite their way upon their head."—Ezech. ix, 9, 10.

SYNOPSIS.—I. The wickedness of the Jews brought down the punishment of God upon them. The superabundant evil of these days likewise merits punishment. Vincible ignorance no excuse. Violation of eternal laws to be visited by eternal punishment. The doctrine of hell, vigorously attacked by doubt, scepticism, sophistry, ridicule, misrepresentation, etc.

II. The doctrine denied by the many; by the scientific, but the arguments adduced are unscientific. Prayer, fasting, mortification are the books from which are learned the truths of God.

III. The doctrine of hell distorted, not considered in connection with correlated doctrines. Made repulsive by Calvin's blasphemous position; rejected by reason of the denial of purgatory; abandoned by those who dwell exclusively on the physical sufferings of hell.

IV. Chief cause of denial of this doctrine is the moral disposition of men, viz., (a) rejection of everything supernatural; (b) sensuality; (c) pride; (d) general sinfulness. The rejection of this truth the surest way to hell. God's grace enlightening and sanctifying us will preserve us from this punishment.

I. In this passage the prophet gives us to understand that the wickedness of the chosen people was completed and its measure filled up, by their disbelief in the vigilance and stern justice of God. Punishment was inevitable for their sins. They sought to escape from this crushing knowledge by asserting that God could not see them or would not punish them. "How doth God know, or is there knowledge in the Most High" (Ps. lxii, 11). But this ignorance did not alter facts; it did not excuse them like that ignorance which is invincible; it only indicated a deeper perversity of heart and attracted a severer punishment. The present times may very well be compared with those. There is the same superabounding wickedness, the same resistance to light and truth, the same denial of divine knowledge and future retribution. There are many who say, in effect and in actual word, "The Lord seeth not." Let us make the most of this life for there is no other. We can sin freely, we may gratify every desire; there is no judgment, there is no place of punishment hereafter, and with due precautions we shall escape punish-

ment even here. But yet "the Lord shall laugh at him: for He foreseeth that his day shall come" (Ps. xxxvi, 13).

The present age has gone beyond all those that are past, in denying the existence of hell. Hitherto the voice of the Church, the voice of Scripture, the voice of nature, reason, and conscience, have convinced even the most lawless sects that an eternal punishment awaits the violation of eternal laws. But now, various causes have combined to lead most of those who are outside the Catholic Church to reject this most important truth. Pride of intellect and spiritual ignorance, the tendency to rebellion and moral corruption, have created a new spirit of the age, which has set itself resolutely in opposition to this doctrine. Against it have been marshaled all the forces of sophistry, ridicule, misrepresentation. The attack has been most vigorously conducted with so much success outside the one true Church of Christ, that its leaders boast of having forever delivered mankind (i. e. certain sections of some communities), from "an appalling burthen of cruelty and terror." Our task is to see how conformable is the Catholic doctrine of hell, as to its existence, its torments, its eternity, with right reason and natural law. We will consider the denial of hell, how it has been encouraged by the prevailing spirit of the world, and how the incomplete presentation of the doctrine by heresy has made it seem distorted, inconsistent with other truths, and incredible.

II. The deniers of hell rely upon their multitude and their position as men of science. To the mind that has any belief in Christianity, this is not of much weight. Religious truth is not a matter that is decided by a counting of votes like an election or a criminal trial. There have been times when truth was with the minority as when Our Lord was condemned by the civil and the religious tribunals, by the government, and by the populace. In such a case we have only to remember the prophet's servant, who was terrified by the army with horses and chariots that had come out against them. Eliseus answered, "Fear not, for there are more with us than against us," and the servant's eyes were opened to see the whole mountain full of horses and chariots of fire (IV Kings vi, 16, 17). There have been times when truth was not with the learned and the great; so it was when our Lord's enemies asked, "Hath any one of the rulers believed in him, or of the Pharisees?" (John vii, 48). In such a case we may remember that human opinions are of no account, that they vary from age to age, and like the wind, are never fixed.

Who are those who presume to deny offhand this great mystery of divine justice? Are they men enlightened by the Spirit of God, who have meditated on His word in fasting and prayer? Are they men of rigid virtue and spiritual experience? Not so. The more creditable among them are men whose training and whose knowledge are confined to worldly and material sciences, and rather unfit them than otherwise for spiritual investigations. The majority are men of profligate life, hostile to truth and virtue, who desire that there should be no hell to punish them for their past sins or disturb the enjoyment of future ones. They are most anxious to mislead others, so as to gain further confidence from their numbers. Those are they whom Jesus Christ calls the world. Their earthly and carnal standards can not be applied as tests of supernatural truths. Their judgments are bound to be diametrically opposite to the judgments of God. Their condemnation of any doctrine almost amounts to a proof of its truth.

III. One of the chief causes of disbelief in hell is the very distorted form in which the doctrine has been presented to those outside the Church. It does not occur to them to examine the doctrine at its source and to enquire what is the Catholic view. They take their notions of Christian doctrine from some heresy condemned by the Christian Church. They make no account of the teaching of that body which alone has treated these subjects scientifically, which has a life five times longer than the oldest of the sects, and which embraces the large majority of professing Christians.

1. Hell is connected with other truths, and as these truths lose their hold on men, so does belief in hell fade away. The idea of God has degenerated. Men have lost the sense of His presence, and of that infinite holiness which is too pure to behold iniquity. They think of God as if He held the world's view about sin. They have no notion of the infinite malice, ingratitude and filthiness of mortal sin. They look on it just as an amiable weakness, often as a mere joke; if they do ever disapprove of it, it is only because it is coarse, or offensive, or injurious to temporal interests. And they imagine that when the positive act of sin is over nothing of it remains, no permanent stain on the soul, no obstinate adherence of the will to it, no complete severance from God, nothing but what can be rectified by a brief punishment. So far as they do consider God in the matter, they picture Him as possessing only one attribute, viz., the sort of weakly benevolence that has come to replace divine charity

in so many minds. Not knowing how to reconcile infinite mercy with vigorous justice, they drop the justice entirely out of sight, and they interpret mercy as being indifference to sin. If they studied properly the terrible mysteries of the Passion and Death of Our Lord, if they realized the cost at which He atoned for sin, they might perhaps understand the sternness of divine justice, the violence of sin, and the consequences it must entail on those who die in it obstinate and unforgiven. Thus it comes to pass that hell is looked at out of connection with other doctrines; the consistency and reasonableness of the doctrine are not grasped, and men are only too eager to dismiss it from their creed.

2. Another thing that has made hell revolting to many minds is the blasphemous doctrine of Calvin concerning it; viz., that some men are destined for heaven, and some for hell; that these last are created by God expressly for the purpose of being condemned eternally, as a manifestation of the divine severity. This blasphemy was, of course, condemned by the Catholic Church, and probably at this day, very few Calvinists even would dare to maintain it. Yet those who condescend to argument in opposing hell persist in taking this hideous caricature as representing, not merely the belief of all Protestants, but even of the Catholic Church; they allow their just indignation to carry them too far, and not content with rejecting the parody of the truth, they reject the truth itself.

3. Another thing that has caused modern Protestants to deny hell is the confusion in their theology caused by the denial of purgatory at the time of the Reformation. Purgatory is one of the points of reconciliation between God's mercy and His justice. The knowledge of a place where the minor debts due to transgressions can be paid, and where the perfecting of the soul for heaven can be completed, enables the Catholics to hope for the salvation of many whom the consistent Protestant must believe to be lost. Those who believe that there are only two states after death, and that every man enters at once into final happiness or final misery, have to believe that those who are not perfectly fit for heaven must be lost forever. Yet it is so evident that very few, even good persons, are fit for immediate admission into the presence of God; it may be that they are cut off suddenly, or they are full of imperfections, or they are in the habit of some smaller sins; these smaller sins, the consistent Protestant must hold, can be punished only in hell. This makes the doctrine of hell far more rigorous than it is in the Catholic Church. It must

inspire an uneasy fear as to almost all who die; it makes salvation appear impossible for the vast majority. It excites the fear that many of the lost have been treated with great severity, or even injustice. Purgatory gives the Catholic hope as to doubtful cases, and makes him feel that any one, no matter what his life, may possibly be saved. In their ignorance of purgatory, some Protestants have rejected the idea of future punishment entirely as involving harshness in God and the loss of so many souls. Others, on the other hand, are prevented by Scripture and reason from denying future punishment entirely; they see that almost all men deserve some kind of punishment after death, they shrink from declaring it to be eternal for all of those, so they would make out that it is eternal for none. They would make hell a place of temporary suffering and purgation. They can find no escape from the difficulties created by the denial of purgatory, but in now denying hell, or else making of it a purgatory for all men without the name.

4. Others have been misled as to the nature of hell by dwelling exclusively on the descriptions of physical tortures with their material details, and by not distinguishing between liberal and figurative expressions. They think of hell as simply a place of fuel and flames and the undying worm, and forget that the loss of God is the chief and essential punishment in hell, and that this constitutes damnation in its strict sense. The neglect to take account of this gives quite a different aspect to the doctrine of hell, and has led men to reject it as too gross and material.

These different kinds of misrepresentation have formed the basis for attacks upon hell. In no case has the real doctrine, as laid down by the Church, been fairly met and discussed, but only some figment that does duty for it. It needs little more than a plain statement of the doctrine of the Church, to refute most of the current objections about hell.

IV. But, after all, honest investigation and good will help men to rectify most misrepresentations: the chief cause of the denial of hell is to be found in men's own dispositions, in the character which they have formed for themselves or the age has formed in them. They do not believe in hell, because for reasons of their own they do not wish to believe in it.

1. First there is a deep-seated spirit of hostility to the supernatural. Many are completely wrapped up and engrossed in the things of this world, convinced that they are the sole matters of importance, the

sole reality in life. They care for nothing else, they give no thought to anything else, and at last they come to think there is nothing else. They hate the intrusion of the supernatural into the sphere of the natural; they can not bear that any man's conduct should be guided by considerations of God and His law, of the soul, its sanctification and salvation. Above all things they abhor the terrors of the supernatural, and treat them as ghost stories for frightening children. Materialism and naturalism, or the concupiscence of the eyes, this enemy of salvation is one great enemy of belief in hell.

2. Next comes the spirit of sensuality and luxury, the delight in the pleasures of life, in softness and refinement. Where this prevails, suffering is considered as the greatest of evils; its function is not understood, nor its uses in the hand of God for purifying and for chastising. Pain comes to be considered as essentially evil, a thing not to be tolerated or permitted by a merciful or good being; it is a greater evil than sin itself, and must not be used for the punishment or even for the suppression of crime. To minds full of this spirit the idea of hell is most shocking. A place where there is no pleasure or refinement, nothing but most terrible and eternal pains, is too gross for their fine sensibilities. They are much of the opinion of the old French duchess, that God would think twice before condemning a person of her quality to hell.

3. Pride also causes men to revolt against belief in hell. It is humiliating to their dignity to quail before what they choose to consider as a threat, or to admit that they can be on a level with criminals, and may have to share the fate of the vilest of mankind. It gratifies their pride, it gives them a momentary superiority over religion, over God Himself, to laugh at His wrath and to go their way regardless of His laws.

4. Then there is the exceedingly great sinfulness of men in general, especially of those who have thrown off the restraints of religion. They have been led into sin early, they are surrounded by it, they have run after it eagerly, it has become part of their lives; it is like the atmosphere, which they breathe without being conscious of it, it is second nature to them. The mind is perverted, remorse has ceased, the conscience has been falsified or silenced. Men have formed a new moral code for themselves, which is almost the opposite of that which God has given us through conscience and religion. They will not recognize the horrible wickedness of habits which prevail in their circle uncondemned. They will not admit that the

violation of such unimportant laws as those of faith, mortification, chastity, benevolence, honesty, can be visited with so terrible and widespread a punishment.

Many may rejoice in the spread of incredulity about hell and think it a victory over religion and God, but in reality it is one of the severest punishments of men's sins. They have despised the light of truth, and it is becoming obscured and lost to them. This is the immediate consequence of their worldliness, pride, and sensuality; and the consequence of sin is also its punishment. The loss of this truth relieves the sinner from the wholesome restraint of fear, it closes in great measure the opening to repentance, it leads to further sins and greater ultimate punishment. An increase of crime follows as a punishment on the denial of hell, and so the denial of hell becomes the surest way of bringing men thither.

May God grant us a firm belief in all the truths He has revealed, in those of His terrible justice no less than in those of His mercy. May we ever understand the enormity of sin, the outrage it inflicts on God and the degradation on ourselves, the infinite price Our Lord paid to expiate it, and the terrible woes of such as refuse that expiation. May we never be led by the false wisdom of the world, or terrified by its denunciations or its ridicule, into a doubt of this important doctrine. The words of God may contradict our pride and our sensuality, they may be terrible to us, but they are for our advantages, spiritual and temporal; they may be words of wrath, but they are at the same time words of eternal life.

XL. THE DANGER OF DAMNATION.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JAMES BELLORD, D.D.

"With fear and trembling work out your salvation."—Phil. ii, 12.

SYNOPSIS.—Words of the text addressed to good Christians. They hold good for us and for our times, no matter how virtuous we may be.

I. Ignorance of the danger is a danger in itself.

II. Holy Scripture warns us of the danger of damnation. (a) Words and parables of Our Lord; (b) Examples of Adam, David, Sampson, Solomon, St. Peter, Judas.

III. Lives of the saints teach the same doctrine.

IV. Existence of the Sacrament of Penance no excuse for neglect of danger.

V. Other graces needed besides those given in Sacrament of Penance to insure salvation. The lesson of the failures of others, e. g., one of the forty martyrs; companions of Japanese martyrs.

VI. Our present state of goodness no proof of future salvation. Great graces mean greater responsibilities.

VII. The wickedness of others no assurance of our escape from hell.

VIII. The goodness and mercy of God no proof of the certainty of our salvation. Death of the apostle and the robber.

IX. Yet all things possible to God; (a) grace sufficient given; (b) co-operation required; (c) watchfulness; (d) constant prayer with humility will surely succeed.

These words of the Apostle were addressed, not to sinners, but to His dearly beloved disciples who had always obeyed; not to those who were at the moment walking the path to hell, but to the just who were doing well, of whom there were good hopes, who were really working out their salvation, who were visibly on the way to heaven.

How many are there among similar Christians who act in this way? Very few indeed. Fear and trembling in working out their salvation are, as a rule, about the last things to enter into their minds. They are filled with horror now and then when they picture to themselves the sufferings of hell, the abandonment by God, the society of the wicked, the despair, the eternity. But they soon recover from such feelings and relapse into their usual easy-going state of mind. The average Christian is very tranquil about his salvation, he looks forward with great assurance to heaven, as if it were his already. He goes on quietly, attending pretty regularly to all his spiritual and worldly duties, not disturbing himself about venial sins, falling occasionally into mortal, confessing them in due course

without overmuch sorrow, and troubling no more about them. He is not mortified or troubled, does not do much good, but takes his ease, is very well contented with this world, and makes the most of it. He gives no great scandal, falls into no very grave neglect of God, and on the whole is a good man. It would seem from such lives that it is the easiest thing possible to work out our salvation; that we have little else to do but to be passive, and trust to the infinite merits of our Blessed Redeemer who has taken everything on Himself. If we were asked whether we were in the least danger of eternal condemnation, we should generally, after making the slight reservations that are supposed to be due to modesty, answer that we were not in any danger of such misery. The question, however, is by no means an idle one. We need to put it to ourselves, and seriously reflect upon it. Judging ourselves and our prospects with severity, as we ought, we may discover that we are in considerable peril of losing our souls.

1. The fact of concluding that we are not in such danger is in itself a very great danger. To be contented with ourselves is no small degree of pride. To be without fear of hell is by no means the proper way of avoiding hell. It comes perilously near the unchristian arrogance which shocks us in those who say triumphantly that they are already saved. No one who has ever heard of the virtue of humility could say such a thing. But do not many think it in effect, in the secret of their hearts? We are bound to fear for our salvation; not with a fictitious fear and a sham modesty, as who should say: "I must conceal my real goodness and excellent prospects from my own eyes, lest I puff myself up with pride, and so destroy both the goodness and the prospects." This would be unreality, insincerity, and not according to the mind of Him who is infinite truth and truthfulness. It would be a thin veiling of actual presumption under the appearance of humility, a pharisaical and unsafe state. Let us recognize our actual goodness, but in all its smallness and instability; let us recognize that there is real danger of hell, and serious cause for fear, and let us make every provision against so great a calamity.

2. What are the teachings of Holy Scripture on this matter? Surely that the work of our salvation is most serious, and difficult, and uncertain, and that it demands all our energies. Our Lord says nothing about its easiness and simplicity, and our leaving it all to Him; but He bids us frequently to watch, and pray, and

beware of temptation; He tells us of the difficulties of the narrow way, of the many tribulations through which we must pass; of denying ourselves and taking up our cross if we would follow Him; of renouncing all our possessions to become His disciples, of doing violence to gain the kingdom of heaven. Then in many parables He reminds us of the numerous failures, of many called and few chosen, of the few who find the entrance of the narrow way though many seek it, of the negligence which excluded the thoughtless virgins from the marriage feast. Moreover, after we have done all things, our salvation is still uncertain. "There are just men and wise men, and their works are in the hand of God; and yet man knoweth not whether he be worthy of love or hatred" (Eccl. ix, 1). The holiest of men were full of fear on account of the uncertainty of their future. David, when in the grace of God, looked back upon his past and prayed: "From my hidden sins cleanse me, O Lord, and from those of others spare thy servant" (Ps. xviii, 13). He feared they might have dominion over him, and therefore he dared not say he was without spot. St. Paul with the knowledge of his great labors and supernatural gifts, looked to the future, and had misgivings lest, after preaching to others, he should himself become a castaway. There are abundant examples that prove the frailty of men even when raised to high sanctity. Adam in paradise, Sampson, the judge of Israel, David, the friend of God, Solomon, wisest of men, St. Peter, the prince of Apostles, Judas, another of the twelve, these prove that no man can consider himself confirmed in grace and sure of eternal life.

3. In the lives of the saints of God, we may see how to read the foregoing teachings of God's word. They took them, not as pious exaggerations, but in all their literalness. Among the sentiments common to all the saints was an extreme fear of the vigor of the divine judgments, a fear that bears all the signs of perfect sincerity. Can we say that this was really ungrounded, that it was a pious self-deception, or an involuntary falsehood, and that such a thing is wholesome? Not so. That which is untrue can never be good. There must have been solid reason for these friends of God to feel such fear and trembling in working out their salvation. As we read their histories we can not feel that there was any room for fear; but then we read with the knowledge of subsequent events. As matters have turned out they are saved, and the probabilities were that they would be saved. But before their deaths there could not be any

certainty, except so far as it was made known by divine revelation. Their salvation, though foreseen by God, was conditional on their humility, and prayer, and perseverance. They were still in the balance, and not confirmed in grace; their free will was in no way necessitated toward God. Their privileges, their aids from God were enormous, but their responsibilities were equally enormous; trials and perils awaited them greater than we can conceive, and punishment too if they had failed. Therefore they were full of fear. Yet we dare to presume where the saints trembled; we fools rush in where angels fear to tread.

4. But on the other hand, we may bring forward the Sacrament of Penance, and take great comfort to ourselves from it. We may say to ourselves: Is not Our Lord's Word positive, "whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven"? Is not the Precious Blood truly applied to us to wash away all our stains? The conditions of forgiveness are distinctly laid down by the infallible voice of the Church. We have confessed our sins as far as we knew them; and even those we have inculpably forgotten have still fallen under the power of the keys. Though our contrition has not been intense, still is it not one great benefit of the sacrament that it gives to a low degree of contrition, a sufficiency in the tribunal which it does not possess without it? How, then, can we fear and tremble without calling into question truths which are of faith?

In consequence of this, we think it safe to put away our sins and neglect all further penance for them. After a hurried Confession, and a little more than a formality of sorrow, just sufficient to save us from the guilt of sacrilege, we are content to let bygones be bygones. Not so did the hermits of the deserts with their life-long penances; not so the many saints who imitated the royal prophet in that their sins were always before them; not so St. Peter, who wept all his days for that momentary denial which his Master had forgiven and forgotten.

But on the other hand we must take account of that extraordinary expression of Holy Writ: "Be not without fear about sin forgiven" (Eccl. v, 5); and we must be cautious in attributing to the Sacrament of Penance more than it actually does for us. Our sins may be really and truly forgiven, and yet abide in many of their consequences. The temporal punishment remains even after the guilt is entirely removed by forgiveness. God in His mercy takes away all that directly impedes our salvation; but as to the other

effects of sin, "Every one shall bear his own burthen" (Gal. vi, 5). The most dangerous part of our temporal punishment consists, not in physical pains, but in the liability to relapse into the same sins, or to forfeit grace in the critical moment of some different temptation. How far have our weak attrition and incipient love of God gone toward blotting out this terrible, unknown liability? All they have done has been to secure the remission of the guilt; the evil consequences abide in those weak points of our defence, which are only discovered by their giving way in the moment of some special stress.

Among our forgiven sins we may count our hidden sins, absolved with those confessed, and also the sins of others, following remotely from our acts or omissions, and not directly imputed to us. We still incur for them an additional debt of temporal punishment; a debt perhaps greater than what we owe for our own transgressions; a debt perhaps for a long train of sins, and it may be even for the loss of souls that will forever cry out for vengeance on us.

5. Forgiveness of sin in the sacred tribunal is very far from being all we need. There is an absolutely necessary grace and an absolutely gratuitous one, quite unconnected with the absolutions we have received, and not to be merited by any deeds of ours. It is the grace of final perseverance. For this we need to be always working and praying. But what have we been doing? Have we not taken perseverance for granted, trusted it to take care of itself, supposed that it was secured sufficiently by our ordinary confessions? This is most precarious; it is almost suicidal. Here is where we shall fall short at the last, in consequence of our scamped repentance, our shallow attrition and neglect of real penance, and in spite of so much good that we give ourselves credit for. Everything goes on, apparently all right, till we come to the critical point. Our confessions have all been valid; there has been just sufficient to make them so; our communions never sacrilegious, and moderately devout; all else respectable, some things even admirable. All is well till the sudden stress of Satan's last assault. Alas! we have made no provision for any but ordinary risks; we have not earned by prayer the singular help that is needed at that supreme moment. Grace fails; one mortal sin; and hell forever!

In what has been said may perhaps be found the explanation of those terrible failures at the last moment that we sometimes hear about. There was the miserable apostacy of one among the forty martyrs. His trial was almost finished, he had suffered all but the

last pangs of death, when he left his companions in the freezing water, offered incense to the idol, plunged into the warm bath by the glowing fire, and died on the spot. Again, in Japan, two of the companions of Blessed Spinota had endured with him three years of horrible imprisonment. Condemned, at last, to death, they endured hours of slow burning. Almost dead, they abjured their faith, and were withdrawn from the torture. But the magistrate thought they were too far gone to be worth the trouble of saving; he had them cast back into the flames, and they died apostates when they might have gained the martyr's crown. There had been doubtless some abuse of grace in the forgotten past, some sin, a forgiven sin it may be, whose temporal debt remained unexpiated, and thence some weakness or deficiency which the extraordinary occasion made fatal.

If such failures have occurred in spite of all the graces of half accomplished martyrdom, have we not reason to fear for ourselves? Tepid lives may at times lead to a last and fatal fall during the agonies of death, in spite of past merits and all the graces of Extreme Unction and the holy Viaticum. It may be that some such awful requital for sins and negligences is awaiting us in the distant future, unless we avert it by prayer and penance. Hitherto we have stored up little merit for the evil day, but we have made abundant provision for that temporal punishment, which will cause a failure of grace and perseverance at the fatal moment.

6. What else can we urge in order to excuse ourselves for our tepidity and carelessness in working out our salvation? Shall we say that we are passably good at present, leading respectable lives, committing few sins, and those not very serious? True: but this affords no presumption against a fall. How many have begun well, excessively well even, and yet broken down lamentably a little later in their journey. The lost are by no means made up of such as have been always plunged in wickedness. Almost all have known days of innocence, and have given good promise of persevering and ending well.

Neither can we rely on the many wonderful escapes we have had, and the favors which God's bounty has bestowed on us. They should rather cause us to fear the more; for our abuse of grace has exceeded our correspondence with it, and it may be that we are but tiring out the patience of God. We should rather think of the responsibilities which these mercies heap upon us. They are a

danger as well as a favor. "To whom they have committed much, of him they will demand the *more*" (Luke xii, 48). The day will perhaps come when God will seek the fruit of these graces in some heroic act of self-sacrifice which we have not prepared ourselves to render.

Perhaps we can say that we have served God according to our abilities and tried to do such good as came in our way. We may be conscious of having actually done some work for God's glory. Surely this is a solid ground for confidence. The divine justice will not allow us to go without our reward. But can any one say he has done some good work for God? Was it not rather that God did it Himself through our instrumentality, as He could have done it by the instrumentality of a stick or a stone? If He has used us for His purposes, is it not reward enough for us that we have had the honor and happiness of doing something for Him? It may be that God can say of our good works: "Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward" (Matt. vi, 5). We may have taken out our reward in the praise of men, in our own conceit, or in good things temporal and spiritual already received from God. Whatever the supernatural merits we may have gained, subsequent sin destroys them. It does not follow that we go unrewarded because we lose our souls. Our reward would then take the form of a mitigation of our punishment in hell. But we can not flatter ourselves that we can have any claims as against God. We belong to Him. He is our absolute Master and has the right to all our service without any additional payment. At the best we are unprofitable servants, what we have done is only what we already owed Him.

7. Nevertheless we can not but feel that others are much worse than ourselves. We do not belong to the ranks of those profligates, whose whole lives are devoted to outraging religion and morality, who are the declared enemies of God and man. Our destination cannot be the same as theirs. It would be unjust to place us on the same level with them. Hell with its eternity of terrible torments is altogether out of proportion with our present state, tepid though that state may be. Yet it is no presumption in favor of our salvation that we are not as worthy of hell as the worst sinner. By similar reasoning we should be unfit for heaven, for we can not think ourselves worthy of that ineffable glory that belongs to the mother of God, the seraphim, and the highest saints. But there are varieties of reward and punishment adapted precisely to the character of

each individual; for each one is himself the source and measure of his joy or suffering. As star differeth from star in glory, so too is there the widest diversity among the fallen stars. We may not be very bad; but there is place in hell for all classes of criminals. Would not a state of tempered punishment in hell be more accordant with our worthlessness, than any participation, however limited, in the infinite sanctity and glory of the divinity?

8. But at least can we not cloak our deficiencies under the goodness of God? He is infinitely tender and merciful. Jesus Christ shed His precious blood for me, and His satisfaction can supply the shortcomings of the whole race of sinners. The deathbed is the special theater of His mercies; thousands of sinners turning then to God for the first time, have been snatched out of the very jaws of hell. Every word of this is true, yet there is another aspect which we must not neglect to look at. Yes; God is good; He wishes our salvation; He has done much toward it, and will yet do more. Still, "He who created thee without thy assistance will not save thee without thy assistance" (St. Aug.). Human co-operation is as necessary to our salvation as the divine action. Where is our co-operation? How much does God expect of us? What have we done? Is it adequate to God's demand? Are we not leaving all to God without doing our share, trusting that He will save us as He created us, equally "without our work"?

We must also remember that God is not only goodness; He is also law; and law in all its manifestations to us is inexorable. Law inflicts full vengeance on all transgressors, it exacts payment to the last farthing. By exception, God overrides the natural effects of law to save us from sin through Jesus Christ. But what if we place ourselves by disobedience outside the operation of His exceptional mercy? God is wonderful in His mercy to sinners, but there is the dreadful alternative that He is wonderful in the severity of His judgments. He who said that the last should be first said also that the first should become the last. So it is at the deathbed. An apostle and a robber died about the same hour, when the Redeemer was crucified for their salvation; the thief entered into Paradise, the apostle was lost eternally. So judgment and mercy are mingled, and we do not know which we shall deserve. If graces are numerous to the hour of death, so are the perils. There is room for special hopes even against hope, but they are rather for those who have labored under special disadvantages of ignorance, weakness, tempta-

tion, inherited proneness to sin. The special provision of grace is hardly for those who have had ordinary provision made for them in superabundance during life, and have neglected to turn it to account.

9. "And they that heard it said: Who then can be saved? He said to them: The things that are impossible with men are possible with God" (Luke xviii, 26, 27). When we recognize the difficulties of salvation and our own incapacity, when we are filled with fear and trembling, and are moved to arise from our sloth and excite ourselves, then our salvation is nearer to us. There are three special things to be attended to which will, more than anything else, help to make our salvation sure. First, St. Paul speaks of "filling up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in my flesh" (Colos. i, 24). We require to practice the austerities of penance, mortification, self-denial in all its forms. St. Augustine tells us that no one, however holy, should dare to present himself at the judgment seat of God without having done penance. Secondly, we should do abundant works of charity, and especially in the way of almsgiving. According to various passages of Scripture, this has a wonderful efficacy in covering a multitude of sins, in delivering from death, and causing us to find mercy; while on the other hand it is "Judgment without mercy to him who hath not done mercy" (James ii, 10). And thirdly, we should pray incessantly for the great and unmerited grace of final perseverance; "for the continual prayer of the just man availeth much" (James v, 16). In all this we should entertain unlimited distrust in ourselves, and unlimited trust in the power and goodness of God. We shall be able to look forward with well-grounded hopes and much comfort to the prospect of eternal life, provided that we work earnestly for it, and do that work with fear and trembling.

XLI. PREDESTINATION AND REPROBATION.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JAMES BELLORD, D.D.

"Man knoweth not whether he be worthy of love or hatred."—Eccle. ix, 1.

SYNOPSIS.—I. While we concern ourselves with things of earth, God holds the secret of our eternal destiny. This knowledge is part of God's providence.

II. The ways of God's providence are not and can not be within the reach of the human mind. Yet God cares for all and desires all to be proved. Scripture proves that reprobation is man's own doing.

III. The conciliation of God's knowledge with man's freedom.

IV. Sinfulness of criticising God's inscrutable providence. History replete with proof of God's love of and mercy for the sinner. God not bound to prevent sin.

V. Uncertainty of predestination wholesome for the just man and likewise for the sinner. Fear and confidence begotten of the doctrine.

I. God holds in His hands a most terrible secret—the secret of our eternal destiny. We who are so busily occupied here with our buying and selling, our amusements and our petty troubles, have either of two destinations awaiting us, heaven or hell; eternal peace and overwhelming delight in the presence of God, or eternal darkness and misery in the company of malicious and cruel beings. A few years more and every one of us will have passed away. Each year will carry off some of us; fifty years hence few of us will be remaining; a hundred years and not one will be alive. Our places will be filled by others; they will be in the enjoyment of our labors; we shall have no concern in this world which we now value so much. The busy hum and the merry laughter of life will go on as briskly as ever without us; our names will be forgotten; we shall be as if we had never been. Yet we shall be existent and conscious as we are at this moment. We shall have entered into a state of life which will continue unchanged forever and ever. There are only two kinds of life hereafter; it must be one or the other; that is absolutely certain. But which will it be? That is absolutely uncertain. That is the great secret which we shall never know in

this life. Some of us are clearly hastening in the one direction and some in the other; but even this affords no more than a slight presumption as to our future. All may be changed before the moment of death; the first may yet become the last and the last first.

The brethren of Apostles may turn traitors and be rejected while thieves may repent and enter with Our Lord into Paradise. When we consider the promise of so many lives, the faith that is in them, and their persevering regularity in God's service, when we reflect on God's patience with the most obstinate sinners and His abounding mercy, we have good reason for expecting that many of us will be saved. Yet out of so many it is to be feared that some will fail, and that in one or five or fifty years they will be commencing their eternity of woe. God at this moment sees what the future lot of each one of us will be. Past and future are always as the present to Him, and He sees us at this moment in our final abiding place, in glory or in torment. Some of us are at this moment elect, some of us are reprobate; and it may be that the present servant of God is reprobate, and the present sinner predestined to heaven. What surprise there would be, what terror, what despair, if the picture of our future destiny, just as it is in the mind of God, could be suddenly uncovered to our sight!

This foreknowledge of God, and the preparation of some souls for eternal glory, and the assent to the further loss of others, is part of God's Providence. It results from His knowledge of all future things, from His goodness and His justice. This Predestination and Reprobation do not mean that God has called some beings into existence for the special purpose of separating them from the rest and condemning them to hell. The enemies of Christianity have been pleased to assert that this is a Christian doctrine. But it is Christian only in this sense, that it was taught during a couple of centuries by the members of a small and now almost extinct heresy, the Calvinists, who called themselves Christians, but who were cut off from the Christian Church on account of this with other errors. It is distinctly a Protestant doctrine, and is justly condemned by the Catholic Church as false and blasphemous. Calvin's teaching is that God has destined by an irresistible fiat some men for heaven and others for hell. It is unnecessary to point out how wicked this testimony is in attributing such injustice to God the All-Holy; nor how immoral its tendency, since it would induce men to abandon all effort and lead the easiest lives, *i. e.*, lives of vice; seeing that their

actions made no difference to their friendship with God or to their future lot.

II. All the ways of God's Providence must be inscrutable to us. Little children can not judge of the action of their parents toward them. They have not their experience of the world, they have not foresight, they do not know the father's plans for their future benefit, or see the relation between present arrangements and the long distant result that is hoped for. Kindness often seems unkind, and restraint or punishment to be wanton cruelty. We, too, can not conceive God's aims in the government of the world, nor how He means to compass them, nor do we know the secrets of the future. Especially are His mysteries of Predestination and Reprobation obscure; why sin is permitted, how good will come out of it, why evil designs succeed, why some are chosen and some rejected, and how these results are brought about by a combination of man's free actions and God's power and goodness.

But we are certain of some guiding truths. God has created all men for eternal life. He loves all, He gives superabundant means to all. "Christ died for all" (2 Cor. v, 15). If some have received but little grace it is in proportion with what is expected of them, and is more than sufficient for their needs and duties. All are destined to grace, as to life, without respect to any merits or demerits. Whatever use men will make of them, all receive sufficient opportunities. "God our Saviour, . . . will have all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. i, 15). We know also that there are two elements in Predestination, God and man. On God all depends; for man can not merit the supernatural; temporal rewards are all that he can earn by himself. So even when man has done his utmost, the call to eternal life is still a free gift of God, a quite gratuitous predestination. "By grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, for it is the gift of God" (Eph. ii, 8), "Not by the works of justice which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us" (Tit. ii, 5). Yet it is perfectly true at the same time that our election to life depends on our own will and our exertions. "God has left man in the hand of his own counsel" (Eccle. xv, 14). Man's work is as nothing before God, but man's work is essential for His salvation. However great and powerful graces may be, if man refuses to co-operate, they are made null and void. Heaven is a reward as well as a free gift; it must be struggled for and

gained by warfare. "He that striveth for the mastery is not crowned unless he strive lawfully" (2 Tim. ii, 5).

It is not for us to measure these two forces that combine to cause predestination, the supreme power of God and the complete freedom of man's will, we do not know how far man's correspondence depends on God's grace, nor how far God's election depends on man's work. But this is clear to God's vision from all eternity; "the Lord knoweth who are his" (2 Tim. ii, 19); and this is the basis of His predestination. In the depths of eternity God knew of each man, his strength and his weakness, his excuses and his guilt, his sin and his repentance. He could sum up each man's life, and see his final decision as to serving or resisting God. Knowing thus His own, God elects them to eternal happiness. God does not predestine all men to glory as He destines them for life and grace; He can not do so, for they control their destiny. Although predestination is entirely from God, it is yet dependent on man's own will.

Reprobation, on the other hand, is not originally from God but from ourselves. He is the source of good only and not of evil; least of all is He the author of the supreme evil. "God made not death, neither hath he pleasure in the destruction of the living" (Wisd. i, 13). And even of His enemies He has written: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezech. xxxiii, 11). It is not God who separates the sinner, but the sinner's own action that separates him from God. God accepts man's perverse decision at the last, and leaves him to himself and his sin. It is with every condemned soul as with the chosen people: "Destruction is thine own, O Israel; thy help is only in me" (Osee. xii, 9). The decree of reprobation is only God's foresight of this rejection; still God does not therefore cast off the sinner at once, but while he lives continues to bestow on him the most abundant marks of His goodness, patience, and desire for his salvation.

III. Another mystery in this matter hard to understand is, how God has certain knowledge as to our actions and destiny and yet we retain our full freedom of choosing as we wish. As in many other cases, both facts are true, although we may be incapable of reconciling one with the other. God's knowledge is not like a decree of fate fixing a man's destiny; it has no influx upon that man's acts as the cause of them. God knows that such a man will be saved or lost, but this does not compel him to be saved or lost, nor

does it make his efforts ineffectual for either end. Our fate does not depend in any way on God's knowledge of it; but God's knowledge of it before our creation is dependent on the choice we shall subsequently make. The man's own decision compels God's knowledge to take such a particular form. Practically, and as far as men are concerned, it is as if God did not know the future, for we are perfectly free, our future depends on ourselves, and remains undetermined till our death.

Some, no doubt, will be still inclined to say, God sees me as saved or as lost; if as saved, there is no need to take overmuch trouble about what is already secured; if as lost, I can not prevent it, and all my trouble will be wasted. A farmer might just as well use the same argument about the tilling of his fields. The harvest is uncertain. God knows whether I shall get one this year or not. If He has decreed that I am to have a good crop, what need have I to till and sow my fields; if He has decreed the contrary, all my trouble will be wasted, so I may as well save it. What would be the consequences of such argument? It is probable that God would have foreseen a successful harvest as the result of proper labor; but the man's neglect forces God in any case to foresee that he will get no crop because he has not worked for it. Whatever the difficulties of understanding the theory of predestination, we have, as to practice, absolute certainty that God will listen to fervent and persevering prayer, and will infallibly grant us all the means necessary for our salvation. Grace and effort are required. God's grace will never be wanting, and it remains therefore that salvation depends on our sincerely willing it.

St. Ambrose replies to a similar difficulty, that even if a man knew that he was reprobate from God, "the Lord will know how to recall the sentence, if thou knowest how to amend thy ways of sin." In confirmation of this we have the example of Jonas and Nineveh. The decree of God had gone forth against the great city; yet forty days and it was to be destroyed. But all the people did penance for their sins, and besought the face of the Lord, and their punishment, though foretold by God, was averted. The prophet Ezechiel had already said the same thing: "Yea, if I shall say to the just man that he shall surely live, and he, trusting in his justice, commit iniquity: all his justices shall be forgotten, and in his iniquity which he hath committed, in the same shall he die. And if I shall say to the wicked man, Thou shalt surely die, and he do

penance for his sin and do judgment and justice, and if that wicked man restore the pledge, and render what he hath robbed, and walk in the commandments and life, and do no unjust thing, he shall surely live and shall not die. None of his sins which he hath committed shall be imputed to him; he hath done judgment and justice, and he shall surely live" (Ezech. xxxiii, 13-16).

Such are the dispositions of God toward the most obstinate sinner; the way of repentance is always open, the arms of God's mercy are always extended toward him. His knowledge of the future reprobation of sinners is not of the nature of a decree. His knowledge before the event no more restrains a man's liberty of action than our knowledge of the same after the event affects it.

In considering a subject of this kind our ideas can not range up to the divine facts, nor human language express them. The modes of God's existence differ essentially from ours, and are not simply our modes of existence on a magnified scale. We, for instance, can conceive of no being but what is limited like ourselves to time and space extended beyond conceivable limits, but they are the negation of time and space. When we attempt to speak of God's mysterious Being with precision, using words and ideas that have no correspondence with His state of being, we fall necessarily into forms of speech that are self-contradictory and unintelligible.

The same in speaking of God's foreknowledge. He is not like a man who knows for certain beforehand what is to take place in the future. In our case that would simply imply that the future event was fixed and unchangeable. But with God there is no "beforehand," no future. He is in eternity, where there is no succession of past and to come. All is present—actually present before Him from all eternity to all eternity. Our existence, our lives, our future destiny, and God's knowledge of them, are always simultaneously present to Him. It would be a more accurate representation to ourselves of God's foreknowledge, to compare it to a man's knowledge of an event happening before his eyes, rather than to his knowledge of the same event one day or one million centuries beforehand.

IV. We shall fall into error, and into blasphemous error, if we attempt to criticize the ways of Divine Providence, as if we had full knowledge of all the conditions. If evil suggestions should arise questioning the mercy of God in allowing sinners to be born into life, who will be damned, and if we should be unable to

refute them by a direct, and, as it were, mathematical answer, we have still other sources of knowledge which answer the difficulties indirectly, by proving the existence and the action of that mercy which is called in question.

Every page of sacred history, every year of our own experience, witnesses to the long endurance of God with sinners. His prodigality of graces toward them, His generous forgiveness of life-long outrages in return for one moment of penitent love. They are the special objects of His predilection. He has done more for them than He would do for the just; for He tells us that He came not to call the just but sinners, and that the joy in heaven over the one sinner is greater than over ninety-nine just who have not sinned so as to need repentance. What mind but a perverted one could see harshness in this action of God? For the very reason that the sinner has offended God, God has loaded him with blessings, for the very reason that he is undeserving God is more anxious to give him eternal life. Many of the offender's best gifts have been bestowed on him without any trouble or desert; and if the final gift of heaven is not given to him, whom else can he blame but himself? God has almost forced it upon him. The sinner knows of the offer; he is never allowed to forget it; it is offered to him continually on the easiest of terms; he has the means of obtaining it; but he will not stretch out his hand for it, he does not want it, he deliberately rejects it. He refuses the most wonderful and undeserved mercies; can he complain, on account of his rejecting them, that therefore God is not merciful?

Should God prevent all sin? Should He force the sinner's will and compel him to love truth and goodness? It is a contradiction in terms—a forced and unwilling love! It is no favor to man to force upon him that which is best for him but which he abhors. The sinner in hell will certainly never reproach God for this; for does not every sinner pride himself especially on his independence, and resist what he calls an encroachment upon it, even though it be to save him from eternal woe?

Nor can it be claimed that God should interfere with the laws of Nature, and work innumerable other miracles, in order to keep out of existence a certain number who will not be content to profit by the miracles of grace which God has provided for them. To have suppressed the existence of all new lost souls would have involved the suppression of millions more, their descendants, who have served

God faithfully, given Him glory, and attained to infinite bliss. What claim have sinners that all this overwhelming glory and happiness should be sacrificed because they will prove unwilling to share in it?

Finally, we may answer in the words of the prophet to those who blaspheme against the justice and the mercifulness of Divine Providence: "And you have said, the way of the Lord is not right. Hear ye, therefore, O house of Israel: Is it my way that is not right, and are not rather your ways perverse?" (Ezech. xviii, 25.)

V. Uncertainty as to our predestination is a source of anxiety to some and of negligence to others; and we would often desire one glimpse into the secret of God's knowledge. The secrecy is wholesome. If a just man's predestination were made known to him, it would lead him in some cases to presume upon it, to indulge in undue confidence and to fall by pride. If the sinner's reprobation were made known to him, it would take away from him the possibility of salvation that would else remain open to him.

The fact of not knowing whether we be worthy of love or hatred is intended by God as a stimulus to our exertions. How holy soever we be, we have never in this life attained the goal; it is always possible that we may fail and become castaways. We can never dare, then, to rest and take things easily, we can never take pride in our progress. We must always fear for ourselves and struggle onward. The same fact also gives us encouragement where it is most needed. It enables us always to be hopeful of even the greatest sinners, and to see in them the materials of new Augustines, Pauls, Mary Magdalenes. It helps them to put their old life behind them and to walk confidently in the new paths of the grace of God; and it inspires the zeal of those who labor for their conversion. The doctrine of predestination, then, moves us both to fear and confidence, to the fear of ourselves and of our weakness, and to that fear of God which is the beginning of wisdom; it gives us confidence also "of this very thing that he who hath begun a good work in you will perfect it unto the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. i, 6).

XLII. DOES THE CHURCH TEACH THE END JUSTIFIES THE MEANS?

BY THE REV. P. A. HALPIN.

SYNOPSIS.—Introductory remarks on the attacks made against the Church and the need of every Catholic being instructed. Summary of evil consequences following the principle that the end justifies the means. Such doctrine was never taught by the Jesuits. Meaning of the doctrine. The Church teaches that the end can not justify means which are intrinsically wrong. Her history and her holiness prove this. No holiness so ideal as that inspired by the Church.

The Church reproduces the life of Christ as she runs her militant career and undergoes the same humiliations, the same persecutions, the same opposition, the same defeats, and, glory be to God for His infinite mercies, the same triumphs. Like Christ, she is human and she is divine. Her divinity protects her against all error and all failure and all destruction. She is human on the side of the members who compose her organization. These children of hers have all the failings and all the possibilities of their human nature. In response to what may be alleged against Catholics as individuals, we have nothing to say. Let them answer for themselves. If they are accused wrongfully it is theirs to repel the attack. If they are persecuted, upon them lies the obligation to bear up with resignation, and, if possible, with gladness.

It is an altogether different matter, though, when an assault is made upon the Church. Then it becomes the duty of every Catholic, who can, to vindicate her from the insinuations of her enemies. Luckily the fight nowadays is in the open. She has very few covert foes. A whole army of invaders is arrayed against her and we know that they are bold to the extremity of openly hurling the "fiery darts of the evil one." They have attacked her with every possible, every conceivable weapon. Their modes of waging their warfare are numerous beyond all calculation. She has been, all through the lapse of nearly two thousand years, the victim of misrepresentation. Her origin, her mission, her motives, her projects, her conduct, her doctrines, have all been misrepresented. They have lied about her Founder. They have blackened her aims. They have falsified her

intentions. They have execrated her aspirations. They have accused her of arrogant ambition. Above all, they have turned all her teachings into a system of immoral education. In their eyes, and fain would they so paint her to the eyes of the world, she has been an agency of evil principles with which she imbued the minds of her children, so that to be a Catholic and pure, to be a Catholic and honest, to be a Catholic and trustworthy, to be a Catholic and patriotic, to be a Catholic and just, to be a Catholic and law-abiding, to be a Catholic and truthful, to be a Catholic and moral, is simply an impossibility. If there be anywhere the whole universe over an upright Catholic it is due, not to the maxims which she inculcates, but *in spite* of her doctrines, which have no other issue possible save that of corrupting hearts, darkening minds and paving the way to crimes gross, enormous, disastrous to the individual, to the family and to the State.

There are many miracles which go to prove the divinity of the Church, and among them not the least compelling is her survival of the wild storms of calumny with which she has been assailed and through which she is up to this very date victoriously passing.

It would not be difficult to point out the reasons of this most unjust attitude of so many toward the Church. In many cases it is prejudice, in many cases, too, it is unadulterated enmity springing from a hatred which can be accounted for only on the score of an unwillingness to recognize anything good in an institution which maintains always and at all costs what is good and right, an institution which is ever the first to detect tendencies that make for obligation and duty, which is ever the first to sound the alarm when there is danger of ruin to home and country.

The Church has been, since the beginning, the bulwark which has protected all other institutions which involve, in their safety or in their downfall, the safety and downfall of what is most sacred in the interests of the race. It has stood between society and the evil designs of bad men. It has made no difference whether these assailants of the temporal and eternal welfare have been of the proletariate or high placed. Hence it is that "the Gentiles raged and the people devised vain things, the kings of the earth stood up and the princes met together against the Lord and against his Christ" (Ps. ii). They have not been able to avail themselves, these foes of the Church, of any other weapon save those of lies, of calumnies, of misrepresentations. It strikes one, right here, how

necessary it is for the Catholic to know his religion and its tenets. Would that every member of the Church understood his duty in this regard, and understanding fulfilled it! A great deal of unnecessary and unintentional harm is done to what might be called the fair fame, or, better, the reputation of the Church by Catholics who admit through ignorance many views which she not only does not hold, but which she repudiates and condemns. Such a condition of affairs would not exist were Catholics, even of education, even of higher education, only ordinarily familiar with her doctrines or but ordinarily familiar with her history. This very easily acquired knowledge, always necessary, is more so now, when knowledge is a commodity as cheap as it is an indispensable passport in almost all grades of society. What was considered as needful in the time of the Council of Trent is more urgently demanded now.

But how can the faithful know if they are not taught, and how can they hear if they do not assist at the instructions which everywhere at the present time are furnished by their pastors. If ever there was an era of pulpit enlightenment that era is the one we are living in. To meet the mischievous activity of irreligious men and to rear the edifice of Christian knowledge on its only secure and solid basis, the instruction of its authorized teachers, to afford the faithful a fixed standard of Christian belief, to supply a pure and perennial fountain of living waters, to refresh and to invigorate the minds of the hearers, seems in these years to be universally the aim of the pastors of our Churches.

It so happens, then, that the Catholic who is in the dark regarding his religion has only his own indolence to blame. A knowledge of one's Catechism would be of incalculable benefit and would make of each member of the Church a stout and able defender of the Mother to whom he owes so much. "In its pages he will discover a rich treasure of theological knowledge admirably adapted to purposes of practical utility. The entire economy of religion he will there find developed to his view—the majesty of God, the nature of divine essence—the attributes of the Deity and the transcendent operations thereof—the creation, the unhappy fall of man, the mysterious and merciful plan of redemption, the establishment of the Church, the marks by which the Church is to be known and distinguished, the awful sanction with which the Divine Law is fenced around—the nature, number and necessity of those supernatural aids instituted by the Divine goodness to support our

weakness in the arduous conflict for salvation—finally, the nature, necessity and conditions of that heavenly intercourse that should subsist between the soul and its Creator." (See Translator's Preface to "Catechism of the Council of Trent.") Doubtless within these pages the attentive reader will find wherewithal to meet the objections brought against his faith, to know a calumny when it is uttered, to be able to repel a false insinuation instead of being forced through ignorance to hang the head which in so many cases is an admission that the Church is an absurd and lying teacher.

The foregoing has been advanced as a useful introduction to the topic which is to form the subject of this instruction. Probably the most widespread and virulent imputation against the teaching of the Church is found in the accusation that she encourages the doctrine that "the end justifies the means." Such a teaching would be subversive of all morality. It would be an incentive to every species of crime. It would endanger civilization in an extreme degree. It would be an invasion of the most sacred rights whether of the individual or of society. It would blast every enterprise. It would fill the world with monsters and monstrosities. So far-reaching would its consequences be that no one would be safe against it. It strikes at the heart of all righteousness. At its breath every flower of virtue would fade. Principle would not find a footing anywhere among men.

Many crimes have been committed in the name of liberty, but they are almost virtues when compared with the atrocities which would be held in honor were the baneful doctrine that the end justifies the means taught by the professors of Theology of a Church which counts more members within her fold than two hundred and fifty millions.

Picture to yourselves such a vast activity inspired by the infernal maxim which we are here considering! What would become of humanity! Even the Divine Mercy would grow weary, and again it would repent God that He made man, and in some more terrible way than at the time of the deluge would He sweep His handiwork from off the face of the earth.

To understand that there is not the slightest exaggeration in all this, endeavor to grasp the significance of the execrable teaching. The meaning of the doctrine is that every one is permitted the performance of any action provided he has in view the reaching of a good end. Let the end be good and everything—everything—or

rather anything done with that end in view is good. It may be impossible for a man to achieve his purpose, which is supposedly a legitimate one, without committing murder, then is it lawful to commit murder; without infanticide, then infanticide is lawful; without adultery, then adultery becomes lawful; without impurity or obscenity, then impurity and obscenity become lawful; without stealing, then stealing becomes lawful; without treason, then treason becomes lawful; without lying, and calumny and detraction, then lying and calumny and detraction become lawful. This statement is a broad one, it covers large spaces, but it is not broader nor does it cover larger spaces than the truth. Not only under the condition of the doctrine do these crimes fall within the law, but they are virtuous, not only are they virtuous but they become part of the whole duty of man, and circumstances arise when the man who fails to employ these means to the end before him becomes a criminal because he is faithless to the obligation with which the execrable principle burdens his conscience.

This is not only what is involved in the pernicious tenet under consideration, but it is the sense in which it is explained by the enemies of the Catholic Church, and it is also the sense in which they put it forth when they endeavor so frantically to include it in the doctrines propounded and propagated by our holy Religion.

The shocking formula condensed amounts to this. Have an upright, noble end in view, and think and speak and devise and do as you please, recking nothing of human life, human rights, human decency; recking nothing of virtue, recking nothing of God or of His laws. That the Church teaches this abomination to her children, that she has encouraged them, nay, commanded them to follow it as their guide in all their deliberate dealings with mankind, has been declared by word of mouth in pulpit and lecture hall, has been handed down from age to age in the pages of history so many writers of which have entered into a confederacy to speak never a word of truth concerning the transcendent beauty and unimagined holiness of the Faith which is ours. It would seem unnecessary to utter anything in reply to this sweeping libel of the centuries. One body of teachers have in the most malicious fashion been bespattered by the mire of this iniquitous aspersion. They are that loyal body of tireless champions of the purity and integrity of Catholic dictrine, they are the devoted, learned and fearless followers of Loyola.

That they, above all men, should be accused of teaching the doctrine of the justification of the means by the end is a never-ceasing wonder. Still the accusation is repeated month after month, year after year. In vain have they protested. They have challenged their adversaries to show in any book published by any of their society, and with the approval of superiors, this maxim advocated. Rewards of no small sums of money have been offered by their friends to any one who could bring home any writing of theirs favoring the declaration of their enemies that among their data of ethics was one admitting that evil could be done so that good might come from it. No one has advanced any proof, and to no one has the prize yet been given. As it was in the past so it is now, and so it will be unto the end. Let us even suppose that such were the teaching of the Jesuits individually or collectively, the disgrace therefrom could not attach to the Church, for no religious association is the Church. What is the teaching of the Church on this point? It is just the reverse of what her foes allege. If she has any clear utterance on the matter, it is that the end can not justify the means, it is that what is evil, which is intrinsically wrong, can not be made good or right by any advantage, no matter how great, whether in the temporal or in the spiritual order, which might result therefrom. If the truth were told, it would be the startling revelation that one reason among others why the Church finds herself opposed by such a host of bitter foes in this and other directions is because they have found themselves balked in their machinations by the determined stand which she takes anent this very matter under dispute.

Professional men would like to work as they please on the minds of their clients or their patients, but meet with heroic resistance that, instead of compelling admiration frenzies them with anger and hatred. Do you wish to learn the true history of the pernicious theory? Look not into the records of the Catholic Church, but into the record of paganism, heresy and infidelity. From the first days of Christianity, the story is one of Catholics facing poverty, persecution, death rather than have recourse to the vile evasions suggested by their oppressors. The holiness of the Church which began with Christ, and which continues until the present day, is a brilliant refutation of the claim that our Faith in any way expounds and encourages such a degradation of private or public morality. Her teaching since the beginning has ever been the same

sane teaching, a teaching which is based on immutable principles. The end justifies the means? Evil can be turned into good? Never has such a view directly or indirectly polluted her sacred lips. Will she allow a man to lie to save a life, save a soul? Never! The lie will always be a lie, no matter how prolific it may be in good results. The same is true of all that is morally evil. The Church considers the deliberate act in its integrity. She considers the intention, the means. The slightest flaw, whether in the means or the intent, vitiates in proportion the whole act. She condemns any act which by its nature, or by anything in its production, or by anything in the intention of the one who performs it, is not in accordance with what is right. If the end in view is bad, the act is bad; if any of the means employed be immoral the act is immoral, if the end in view is bad again is the act reprobated, and the agent falls under the censure of his religion. In a word, whether what is said, spoken or done is in itself unjustifiable, no matter how successful a means it may be, toward no matter how worthy, noble or exalted an end, the whole act is repudiated.

It is only natural to ask whether, such being the position of the Church, any loophole of evasion exists. The Church does not look at the means only or at the end alone, but she regards the totality of the act and she pronounces it perfect or not, good or bad, right or wrong, moral or immoral, justifiable or not, solely when the complexity of the performance presents to her very searching scrutiny a whole without blemish in every one of its essential and component parts. The Church of God is the mother of Saints and the preceptress of holiness. All of her maxims will bear the closest investigation. There is not one of them which does not make for supreme sanctity. There are no acts so beautiful as those she commands and inspires. Her influence reaches to the very thought. She demands purity—but what white purity! She feeds among the lilies and her jewels are her virgins in and out of the cloister, for they are everywhere. But she calls for virginity of thought and virginity of word as well as for virginity of action. There was never conceived such an ideal of sanctity as that proposed by the Church. Her voice has been heard deep down in hearts, and the response has been a universal and a constant one. There are still Agneses and Johns in the Church, and there will be until the end. So much force for one species of holiness which is not understood by the men and the women whose motto it is to eat and to drink and to be merry.

But there is holiness for every condition in life. There is the holiness of love and honor and also devotion of children for parents. There is the holiness of conjugal fidelity. There is the holiness of the poor, sanctifying by resignation the hardship of existence. There is the holiness of the rich who are poor in spirit. There is the holiness of the servant and the laborer true and faithful in all the circumstances of their state of life; there is the holiness of the master and the employer who forget not gentleness and that the defrauding of wages is a crime crying out for vengeance. There is holiness among all and everywhere. Than this no better refutation can be made of the calumny of those who would make our Mother the perverter of peoples, who would wrest from her her proudest title—the title proclaiming her holy and prolific in Saints.

XLIII. ON MIRACLES.

BY THE RIGHT REV. MGR. JOHN CANON VAUGHAN.

"Rabbi, who hath sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind? Jesus answered: neither hath this man sinned nor his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him."—Isa. ix, 2 and 3.

SYNOPSIS—The widespread spirit of Rationalism and the great development of the natural sciences have caused the doctrine of Miracles to be denied by many outside of the true Church. Definition of miracle, classification. Miracles are possible since God can transcend the forces of nature and is willing to. God can do so because He is omnipotent, omniscient, supreme in every way, and all creation depends upon Him. Secondly, there is no repugnance on the part of nature. Nature not upset, for miracles are local events and passing events. Divine immutability not destroyed because God's action in reference to miracles is from all eternity. God's purpose in working miracles is to help men—seen clearly from Christ's life and miracles. Thirdly, the positive evidence of trustworthy witnesses proclaim that miracles are not only possible but have actually taken place. Case recorded.

Every age has a distinctive character of its own, which marks it off from all that have preceded it. Thus, we have had ages of rank paganism and ages of sterling faith; ages of religious persecution and ages of religious fervor; and so on throughout the centuries. To-day we are living in an age of scepticism and doubt, of incredulity and denial.

There is hardly any doctrine however holy, hardly any dogma however well grounded, that is not loudly and insolently denied by some class of men. And, the more thoroughly supernatural the belief may be, the more certain are worldly-minded men to quarrel with it, and to condemn it. This being the case, it is hardly to be wondered at that the belief in those portentious occurrences in nature, that go by the name of MIRACLES, should arouse the opposition of many writers and thinkers to-day, and should be declared by them absurd and wholly unreasonable.

The extraordinary advances of science and the stronger realization of the reign of law that is found to prevail in every part of the known universe, have rendered men impatient of the very idea of any violation of the ordinary sequence of events, and of any departure from the pre-established order. Their one great aim is to

discover the rules that regulate the world around them, and all it contains. But once these rules have been laid bare, they wish to apply them strictly and universally, and can brook no exceptions. If fire does not always burn; if cork does not always float; if water does not always seek its own level; if, in a word, law is not constant, changeless and reliable, how, they ask, can there be any real knowledge? How can science be progressive or even possible?

It is thus that men argue whose thoughts are riveted upon this world alone and who mind earthly things. To those, on the contrary, who take a wider survey, and who look beyond the visible phenomena to the invisible Creator of them all, the universe presents a much more impressive, as well as an immeasurably sublimer picture. To the Catholic the creation is no mere piece of machinery which has been set going, nobody knows how and nobody knows by whom! It is no clever automaton, which must not be disturbed nor interfered with lest its complicated parts should get out of order and its wheels should cease to turn. No. Such is rather the notion of the unbeliever and the atheist.

To the man of faith the external world is but as the soft clay in the hands of an all-powerful and all-wise Artist who has not only impressed on it the shape it now possesses, but who can change it, and modify it, and add a stroke here or erase a line there, just as He pleases. He is the Infinite and the Omnipotent, and not like a poor human modeler who erects his little statue and then leaves it rigid and dry and unchangeable in its niche. No! The Divine Artist never lets the clay out of His own hands, but keeps it ever in His care, as soft and yielding to every pressure of His fingers as liquid wax.

But let us drop metaphor and state our belief in simpler words.

But in the first place, we may well pause to inquire what it is that we mean precisely by a miracle. In reply, we can not do better than accept St. Thomas Aquinas' definition. He says that it is "A sensible effect, produced by God, which transcends all the forces of nature."

Now an event may transcend the forces of nature in three different ways. Firstly, it may involve an act which no power in nature can ever produce under any circumstances or conditions whatever. Such a miracle takes place when the same body is made to occupy two different places at the same time: this we find in the bilocation of some of the saints.

Secondly, it may involve an act which nature may indeed produce, but not *under the same circumstances,* as for instance the flowering of a dry and dead branch in the depth of winter. Nature can produce blossoms and flowers on a branch, but *not under such circumstances.*

Thirdly, it may involve an act which nature may indeed produce but *not in the same manner.* If, for example, a man have his legs broken, nature may knit together the shattered bones and heal the wounds by a slow and gradual process. But a sudden and instantaneous and complete cure could not be ascribed to unassisted nature, but would partake of the character of a miracle.

Thus we see miracles are of three degrees; examples of each of which are met with both in the Holy Scriptures as well as in the lives of the Saints.

Why are such events denied? It can only be on one of two grounds. It must be either because God *can not* transcend the forces of nature, or it must be because He *will* not. If we are believers in God's existence (and we are not now addressing atheists), it can be only for one or another of these two reasons. We will consider each separately and show that both objections are utterly groundless.

To assert that God the Omnipotent Creator is hampered and restricted in His operations by the very creatures to whom He has given existence, is such an extravagant statement that it is difficult to see how any reflecting mind can entertain it for one moment. Its best refutation is simply to recall facts which we all, as Christians, openly admit. As we are all fully aware: God exists independently of creatures, He existed when nothing else existed. Then (to speak in a human way) a moment came when He determined to exercise His Omnipotence, and to call other beings into existence. He founded the earth and stretched forth the heavens, and established laws to govern and control all that He created. These laws, which we find running through all nature, are His, just as much as the objects that they govern. He is absolute Lord and Master, not only of the material universe which we can see, but of the forces and powers which we can not see. Nothing can withstand His power or offer any opposition to His will. "All things whatsoever he wishes he does."

So dependent are all creatures on God, that nothing can endure for one brief moment unless He support it. For God to forget any

creature would mean the end of that creature. It would at once cease to be. Did He relax His hold on any being whatsoever, that being would fall back into its original nothingness just as certainly and as promptly as a stone now held between my fingers would fall to earth were I to open my hand.

It stands to reason that He who made all things and who gave laws to rule all things, and whose assistance and support are needed to maintain them, must possess full power to alter, or suspend, or to modify what, at every moment, is so absolutely dependent upon Him. The difficulty in admitting miracles, if difficulty there be, can not possibly come from any want of power on the part of God. We may then dismiss the first objection without further delay.

But is there any greater force in the second objection? Evidently not. It is objected that any change in the laws of nature, established by God, is impossible, because it would imply a change in the Unchangeable, and that it would indicate an alteration in the divine mind and purpose; and further, that the whole of nature is so intimately connected and bound together that an exception or a relaxation or a suspension in any law would mean a dislocation of the entire universe and tend to breed confusion. But such reasoning betrays an ignorance which is little creditable to the objector.

The Divine immutability is in no way compromised by a miracle, since a miracle argues no change in the decrees of God. St. Augustine expresses the whole doctrine, with his usual accuracy and precision, in a single sentence: "*Deus opera mutat, non consilium.*" God produces a change in external things, but there is no change in His own mind. Both the laws and the exceptions to those laws fall under the same divine Providence. He does not first establish a law and then suspend it when some special and unforeseen circumstance arises. There is no future in God's knowledge, and nothing unforeseen. Every circumstance which to us is future, is seen by Him, as actually present. His plans are laid from the beginning, with the full and present consciousness of every prayer that will ever be addressed to Him, and of every circumstance that would make a miracle useful or desirable. The interruption of a law, or the suspension of a decree, on account of exceptional circumstances, such as the need of manifesting His power, or the testifying to the truth of some doctrine, is all provided for and arranged from eternity, and denotes no shadow of mutability in the mind of

the Supreme Ruler of the Universe. To deny this argues confusion in the mind of the objector.

The Incarnation was decreed so soon as man's fall was known to God; and the fall was known, not only at the moment of its commission, but from the very first; that is to say, from all eternity. But, with the knowledge before Him, God decreed not only to send His only begotten Son, in human form, but He decreed to offer all men striking evidence of His Son's divine personality. For this purpose He decreed that Christ should impress His followers by the complete control He exercised over even the most stubborn laws of nature. Hence we watch Him as He stills the tempest, multiplies the loaves, changes the water into wine, raises the dead, and so forth. These and the other miracles He worked suppose no change in God, since they did not originate as an afterthought, but were decreed simultaneously with the very laws to which they were destined to form such notable exceptions. Further, they were ordained for a wise and most useful and beneficent purpose, viz., to convince men of the truth of Christ's mission.

What possible exception can even the most perverse take to such course? Or how will he contend that it interferes either with the wisdom or the immutability of the Supreme Being, who disposes all things with infinite sweetness and forethought?

And this explanation of Our Lord's miracles holds good—*positis ponendis*—of the miracles worked by others in His name. In every instance the event, however marvelous, was decreed from the beginning and formed a part of that Divine plan which has existed in the mind of God ever since God has been God.

But some object to miracles, because they think that any disturbance of the regular and orderly sequence of events tends to throw the whole mechanism of the universe out of gear. But is this true? It is so far from being true that even we, ordinary sinful men and women, are constantly interrupting and interfering with the action of nature's laws in all parts of the world by the exercise of our free wills, but without any disastrous consequences following. It may, of course, be urged that we suspend the action of a law only by the application of a higher law. Be it so. This creates no difficulty. For God's will is the supreme law, so surely His interference is not so much the abolition of law as the predominance of a higher over an inferior law.

Consider how man himself can suspend or reverse the action of

the laws of nature. Take the law of gravitation. Is it wholly inamenable to our will? An example will show. Here is a heavy stone resting on the ground. The weight of gravity tends to keep it fastened and riveted to the earth. But I stretch down and, seizing hold of the stone, I lift it up over my head, a distance of six feet. What has happened? I have not indeed destroyed the attraction of gravity. No. But I have, in this particular case, and so far as the stone is concerned, rendered it inoperative. Indeed, I have so utterly counteracted its effect that the stone, instead of following the line of gravity, and *falling* from A to B, *rises* in opposition to gravity's force and describes a path from B to A. Have I, in consequence, thrown the whole machinery of the Universe out of gear? Have I, even in an infinitesimal degree, tended to produce confusion? Evidently not.

And if I, with my extremely circumscribed powers, can so modify and control and suspend the action of some of nature's laws, is it reasonable to deny to God and His chosen representatives the power of modifying and controlling and suspending the operations of all nature's laws, even the laws of death and disease?

If I consider the example of the lifting of the stone I shall find that the act was not a necessary consequence of any pre-existing force or series of forces—not a link in an endless chain—but that it was a direct interference of my own perfectly free will. Though I know not *how* my will, which is an immaterial force of my immaterial soul, can act upon matter, yet I know that it does so act when it causes my muscles to move and contract and to raise a weight, or perform other operations. And what is the inference? Well, clearly that what I can do in a *limited* way God can do in an *unlimited* way.

But the clearest and strongest proof we have that miracles are possible is that they have so often happened. This is a fact that may be shown, like any other fact, by an appeal to the testimony of witnesses. The verdict of honest and unimpeachable eye-witnesses ought to be enough to satisfy reasonable men. For such witnesses are not asked to do anything abstruse or difficult, but merely to observe what is taking place before their eyes. When the blind man in the Gospel received his sight it required no extraordinary sagacity on the part of his parents and relations and friends who had known him and compassionated him on his infirmity for twenty years or more, to note what had taken place. It was clear

to all that, before Our Lord touched him, he was blind. It was equally patent to all that afterward he had the complete use of his eyes. The born-blind suddenly received his sight. He who could not see now sees. If the testimony of men on a simple matter of fact such as that is not proof enough, then human evidence can never demonstrate anything, and the very courts of law had better be closed.

Miracles have been proved to have happened in the past, and as God's hands are not shortened, we shall not be surprised to learn that they happen also in these days.

We will close our sermon to-day with a striking instance in point, taken *verbatim,* though not *in extenso,* from an interesting account given by Dr. G. Marsh.

Peter de Rudder, a laborer, aged forty-four, was employed by Viscount de Bus, and lived at Iabbeke, in Belgium, when on February 16, 1867, he sustained a fracture of the left leg, in which both the bones, tibia and fibula, were broken below the knee joint. The limb was put in a starch bandage by Dr. Affanaer, of Oudenburg. Owing to the severe suffering of the patient, the surgeon removed the bandage, when he found an ulcer communicating with the fractured bones, which were bathed in pus. Periostitis had set in. After many months of futile treatment other advice was sought. Dr. Jacques and Dr. Verriot, of Bruges, were consulted, as also Dr. Van Hostenberghe, of Stachille. *All agreed that the case was incurable,* and that only amputation remained. Then the Viscount sought the opinion of Prof. Thiriat, of Brussels, who confirmed that of his confrères.

De Rudder, however, refused to lose his leg, and for a year remained in bed. During the years that followed he got about on crutches and presented a most pitiable sight to all who saw him. Eight years after the accident, April 5, 1875, he obtained permission from the new Viscount, for the old one had died, to go to the Grotto of the Blessed Virgin at Oostacker, a place of pilgrimage much venerated in Belgium. In January of that very year Dr. Affanaer had seen the wound and certified to its condition. Later still, Dr. Verrier corroborated his verdict. Nine days before the pilgrimage some of the neighbors saw and examined the wound. On the very day itself on which he obtained leave to go to Oostacker, those who dressed the limb saw the broken ends of the bones, the interval between the upper and lower fragments, the open ulcers, and the

swollen condition of the leg. On the following day, April 6, the evening before De Rudder set out on his eventful journey to Oostacker, all these details were again seen by other witnesses. On his arrival at the Shrine he was helped to a seat in front of the spot where a statue of Our Lady of Lourdes had been erected. There he drank of the water, and in fervent prayer besought Jesus Christ, through the prayers of His Blessed Mother, to restore to health his broken limb, that he might be able once more to work for the support of his wife and children. Suddenly he arose, leaving his crutches behind him, and walked to the Grotto, kneeling there in prayer. Then, springing to his feet, he burst forth in thanks to God, declaring that he was cured. Accompanied by his wife and a great crowd he walked upright and unaided by his crutches to the castle of the Marchioness of Costabourne, using his once shattered leg as freely as the other. There he was examined. It was found that the swelling had disappeared, the bandages had fallen off, the wounds of the leg and foot were healed, the upper and lower ends of the two bones had been reunited, and there was no longer the interval between them. The two legs were of identically the same length and of equal soundness and value.

For twenty-three years De Rudder lived and worked in the employment of the Viscount, and eventually died from pneumonia at the age of seventy-five on March 22, 1898. The cure was not only instantaneous, but permanent.

Many further particulars might be added in further corroboration of this miracle. But enough has been said to bring conviction to any unprejudiced mind. This is but one miracle among a multitude which have been worked even in our own time. They are open to the examination and study of all who are interested. The evidence of so many and such competent witnesses many of whom are still alive, should be enough and more than enough, not only to prove that miracles really are possible, but that they still take place, even in this incredulous age.

They show that God's hand is not shortened, but that now, as always, He is the Master in His own creation, and can do whatsoever He wills. To Him be glory and honor forever and ever. Amen.

XLIV. ON THE REFORMATION AND THE INQUISITION.

BY THE REV. JOHN FREELAND.

SYNOPSIS.—I. The words of Our Lord to the Apostles, "Lo I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." Source of consolation to them. (a) Division even in Apostolic times.

II. The sign of Catholicity was being on the side of the Apostles. This meant being with and on the side of Christ. (a) The same consideration with regard to the Church; for the Apostolic promises were made to her. (b) Being with the Church the same thing as on the side of Christ. Departure from her, departure from Him.

III. This took place at the so-called Reformation. The cause and circumstances attending that movement. (a) Private judgment and its consequences. (b) Luther and his want of spirituality. (c) Henry VIII and his iniquity. (d) Catholics could have no sympathy with a movement which was attended by such circumstances.

IV. Persecution an objection made by Protestants against Catholics. Inquisition mentioned particularly. (a) This tribunal was a part of the established law just as capital punishment is now. The Church is as much and as little answerable for the Inquisition as Protestantism is for capital punishment. (b) We must look at the subject from the standpoint of the people who lived at that time. (c) The Catholic religion was so much interwoven with the action of the people that in defending themselves, as they presumed they were doing by means of the Inquisition, they seemed to be defending the Church. But to ascribe either the Inquisition itself or the cruelties connected with it to the Church would be the same thing as putting down to the Ten Commandments (e. g., Thou shalt not steal) unjust or exaggerated sentences for the offence of stealing of which we sometimes hear.

The words of Our Lord, "Lo, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world," must have afforded, in after times, the greatest consolation to the Apostles to whom they had been addressed. In hours which otherwise would have been filled with the greatest gloom—owing to persecution, to the difficulty experienced in making prosperous the cause of Christ, to the obstacles placed in the way by open adversaries as well as by false friends—their burden would be considerably lessened, and their sorrow turned into joy, by the recollection of the words with which He at the very last had spoken to them: "Lo, I am with you all days even to the end of the world."

Pre-eminent among the difficulties with which the Apostles had to contend was that arising from those persons who had, first of all,

been their followers and had then opposed them by setting up some kind of religion, differing from that which, in the beginning, they had received. There was Alexander the coppersmith, of whom St. Paul complains. There was Diotrephes, of whom St. John makes mention. There were those who "wrested the Scriptures to their own destruction" of whom St. Peter speaks. In those early times there were many who, to use the words of the Apocalypse, had left their first love, and had commenced walking up and down the great Roman Empire pointing to their own distinctive sect with the words: "Lo, here is Christ."

To the Apostles the promise of the Lord that He was with them was a great rock of defence as well as a cause of supreme consolation. For, if Christ was with them, it was very evident that He could not be with these others. He could not say to His Apostles: "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me," and, at the same time, be with those who contradicted those Apostles almost in every assertion they made. Therefore, even before the Twelve had passed away from this earth, a kind of badge, or sign, or watchword, had been invented by means of which the true Christian was known: was the person who claimed the right of being looked upon as a follower of Christ one who accepted the Apostolic teaching? According to the answer, yes or no, his claim was acknowledged or rejected. To be with the Apostles came to mean the same thing as being with Christ; while the very fact of being found to be in opposition, on matters of doctrine, with those who had been first of all selected by the Son of God to be "ministers of Christ and dispensers of the mysteries of the kingdom of God" was sufficient to prove that they were the enemies of the great Master at the same time.

It is necessary to keep these facts in view whenever we are treating of similar circumstances in connection with the Catholic Church. The promises made to the Apostles were made also to her. She is the continuation of their work. Her pastors—the Bishops in communion with the Roman See, and the Pope without the Bishops when he fulfils the solemn office of teacher of the faithful—her pastors stand before the world in the place of Christ, their claim to the allegiance of all being supported by the very same words as those which supported the same claim made by the Apostles, viz., "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me." The strength of her position no one can deny with-

out denying, nay, destroying that attribute of Christ which makes Him the Supreme Truth incapable of uttering a falsehood. If Christ is the very truth, the Church is here to-day, and not only *the* Church, but *His* Church; for in addressing St. Peter the divine words of Christ are: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build *my* Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." To say that the Church of Christ no longer exists, or that, although existing, it teaches error, is much the same thing as saying that Our Lord gave utterance to an untrûth. He asserts that the gates of hell shall not prevail, while the supposition that the Church has erred asserts just the contrary; and the supposition that the Church has ceased to exist credits hell with having been victorious in the most complete manner possible, that is, by effacing all vestige of the divine Institution from off the face of the earth. The Church of Christ has always been, and still is, then, existing in the midst of mankind. It, and it alone, has the power to teach the truth, since to it alone was the promise of the continually abiding presence of Christ made, as well as that of the indwelling Spirit of Truth. To leave it to act in opposition to it, to teach that which it does not hold, or to refuse to accept that which it does, is the same thing as leaving Christ, as acting in opposition to Him, as teaching what He does not teach, and as refusing to admit that which He Himself has laid down for our acceptance.

Viewed in the light of these considerations, the Reformation of the sixteenth century must appear as a wholesale defection from Our Lord on the part of a large portion of the continent of Europe.

Although the causes of the Reformation have been variously given, it is agreed by all that the principal one was that which goes by the general name of private judgment. Religion, it was maintained, was a matter about which each individual was competent to arrive at the truth by his own unaided reason. Everyone should read the Scripture for himself. Everyone was capable of drawing the proper conclusion from its pages. The plowman at the plow; the weaver at his shuttle; the smith at his forge; the housewife at her spinning wheel, were all endowed with a mind to discriminate, and an intelligence to form an unerring judgment on spiritual things.

In vain did the Church point out the extreme danger of such opinions. Private judgment had its way. Sacred Scripture was read, discussed, disputed about, as a celebrated English historian

tells us, in every beer house and tavern. There was no subject, howsoever holy, which did not become the topic of conversation, often ending in high words, often the cause of life-long contention, and always having, as its ultimate result, the one of making confusion more confusing. The astonishing part of the whole matter is that not even the wisest of the disputants would have laid claim to the power of passing a judgment in any other branch of knowledge. They would readily have granted that not they, but the astronomer, the man who had devoted his life to the study of the subject, was alone able to approach somewhere near to the truth about the movement of the stars. The explanation, the meaning of the laws of the land, they willingly left to the lawyer and the judge. They did not pretend to know each man his neighbor's trade and profession better than he knew it himself; and they would have treated with ridicule the assertion that a mechanic from a town must know more about agriculture than the farmer in the country. Only in religious affairs did they consider themselves better qualified to judge than a Church which had been engaged in the work for over fifteen hundred years. In that one matter, of all others so difficult, so mysterious, teeming, so to speak, with so many deep and unfathomable truths, they gravely asserted that everything could be certainly and surely known by the mere perusal of the Scripture itself.

The inevitable happened. Destruction and discord took place. First the old religion, the only faith known by Europe from the day it became first of all Christian territory, was found fault with, and, little by little, whittled away. Indulgences, purgatory, prayers for the dead, and prayers to the Saints were at once dismissed. Devotion to Our Blessed Lady went next. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass followed. Finally, belief in the Blessed Sacrament, that great sign of Our Lord's love for the human race, was condemned. Everything that was beautiful and soul-inspiring in religion was swept away. Vestments, church decorations, even the playing of an organ, were all solemnly asserted to be inventions of the evil one, and even the fabric of a church was regarded by some as a wicked thing, the open air being the only temple in which a fitting worship could be given to God. This done, the New Religion, Protestantism, as it began to be called, turned upon its own children. Each sect desired to reform the other. Lutherans hated Zwinglians, and these latter returned the hatred with interest. Calvinists destroyed So-

cinians, and Socinians were only prevented from retaliating upon the Calvinists by the fact that their numbers were not sufficient to enable them to do so. In England the Church of England imprisoned the Brownists, the first dissenters; and the two of them together joined hands in persecuting the Anabaptists, and, later on, the Quakers. Before fifty years had passed away, they had all of them shown what the Catholic Church had from the commencement of this unfortunate movement asserted, that private judgment, when left to itself, will create as many religions as there are individuals, each one of which will feel no love for, and show no mercy toward the other.

Again, when we come to consider the characters of the authors of this great religious revolution, it is especially difficult to believe that the hand of God was either guiding or assisting it. Very little real spirituality is to be found in the actions of any one of them. Humility, the virtue so noticeable in the life of the Divine Founder of the Christian Religion, has no place in the sayings, the writings, the general attitude of Martin Luther, who pretended to reform it. No one can read his boisterous and sometimes coarse language against all who dared to disagree with him without a shudder. There is no deep piety, none of that atmosphere of the other world, which we seem to breathe in the exercises of St. Ignatius, in the letters of St. Theresa, all of them real reformers in their way. Luther's language, particularly his Table Talk, is redolent of the air of a tavern. His ideas are of the earth, earthy. When, as would be the case with a reformer, we expect to see the flame of the spirit pure, bright, divine almost, we find only a dark animality of the flesh. We seek the Sanctuary when we open the pages of his great work, the Commentary on the Galatians, and we rise from the perusal feeling as though we had been wading through a turgid stream of the worst unpleasantnesses.

Henry VIII, of England, another reformer, impresses no one excepting by his colossal wickedness. There have been worse kings than he was; there may, perhaps, in the long course of the world's history, have been worse men; but there has never been a person who hath openly and privately committed so much iniquity and, at the same time, pretended that he was working for God in the doing of it. He divorced his first wife because, as he said, his conscience troubled him; he sent the second to the block because the same conscience, so he put it, tormented him; his fifth wife was brought to the

scaffold because he, the husband, as though he were so very righteous, was shocked at her reported crimes; and, at the moment of his own death, he was thinking of sending his sixth wife to her doom because she did not quite see eye to eye with him on what he considered religious views. It is the hypocrisy of the man which is so revolting. It is not merely that he put to death the very best and the most pious persons in the land; not merely that, when he robbed he robbed so extensively and took away, to be used for very worldly objects, that which had been dedicated to God; not merely that before he suppressed the religious houses he wilfully invented, by means of his commissioners, all kinds of crimes against monks and nuns, which had no foundation in fact; but what makes the iniquity of the royal miscreant far more notorious than that of others is that he sinned with pious expressions upon his lips, and made religion and reformation and conscience an excuse for his wicked deeds.

Catholics have never believed that a movement of which the authors were so steeped in wickedness could have come from God. It is indeed wonderful that Protestants can look upon it as a divine or even as a good work. Nevertheless, they do so regard it. You must remember the end, they say. You must think of the result. The means of bringing that end about were of course, bad; there was much violence, much robbery, much innocent blood shed; but the object in view was a righteous one, and it is the object in view, they assert, which condones the employment of the many questionable methods by which that object was attained. They will give this excuse almost in the same breath as that with which they will accuse the members of the Catholic Church of using any means, even the worst and the most reprehensible, to bring about what they consider to be a good object. The accusation against us is indeed very false; but how will Protestants defend the Reformation, brought about by injustices, by imprisonment and bloodshed, by the breaking of many of the chief commandments, unless they have recourse to the principle that the end justifies the means? And, as the principle is a wicked one, how can they regard a reformation, the result of so much that was infamous, otherwise than as being infamous itself?

In connection with this great historical event an outcry is frequently, even now, raised against the sharp and cruel means which, so it is alleged, the Catholic Church in the various countries made use of to impede its progress or to stamp it out completely. Per-

secution, and particularly the Inquisition, are words almost certain to be employed whenever this subject arises for discussion. Look at Spain, it will be said; and immediately the most heartrending pictures will be drawn of the sufferings undergone by Protestants for their faith at the hands of Catholics.

We have no wish to appear either to excuse or to condone persecution of any kind; nevertheless, it must be said that, in laying the faults of the Inquisition at the door of the Catholic Church there is as little reason as there would be in saying that Protestantism is responsible for, *e. g.*, capital punishment. We do not put a man to death for taking the life of another because of the religion of the country, but because such punishment is prescribed for that particular crime by the law of the land. Let us suppose that in three centuries time capital punishment for homicide will no longer exist. The supposition is not an impossible one, for there are distinct signs in some countries of a wish to discontinue the practice. What would you think, were the people living three hundred years hence to speak of the Protestant religion in connection with capital punishment in the same manner as many persons now mention the Catholic Church in connection with the Inquisition? What would we say to some such description of the matter as the following, written we will suppose about the year A. D. 2200: "The Protestant religion in the twentieth century had descended to the lowest depths of depravity. It is fearful to think that, while pretending to forget and to forgive, it was regarded as a holy thing to take revenge on the person guilty of murder and to put him to death for it! A minister of religion, even, would be supplied to the unhappy culprit to prepare him to die. Prayers even were said. For some time before the fatal day the minister would urge the unfortunate man to confess openly his wicked deed and the justice of his sentence, not that he might be let off, but in order that these cruel men might put their victim to death with a more easy conscience. The minister's presence, the prayers, the exhortations, are sufficient to prove the intimate manner in which the Protestant religion was mixed up in this inhuman business. For—the description might be supposed to continue—inhuman it certainly was. Think of the torture which the poor sufferer must have felt at being pinioned, at being blindfolded, at the mere apprehension of the ignominious death by hanging, which, for three whole weeks, his wicked tormentors kept him in continual mind of, and, principally, the minister who visited

him every day. A religion such as this which could lend itself to barbarities of this nature had certainly lost all claim to existence. It must have been rotten to the core."

Now what would be our answer to such wild declamation? We would say that capital punishment was a provision not of Protestantism, but of the State; that the people of the twentieth century make their laws to meet certain matters which they consider to be evils in just the same way as civilized nations have always done; that every punishment has an appearance of cruelty about it; and, above all, we should say, using the words of a very celebrated English writer, that no one is fitted to judge the ages that are gone unless he endeavor, as perfectly as he can, to inhale the spirit and to breathe the atmosphere of those ages.

As we have imagined the critic of the future speaking of capital punishment supposed by that time to be discontinued, so in reality do many still speak of the Catholic Church and the Inquisition. It is easy to wax eloquent about the enormities of this tribunal, but it is quite as easy to make out a case of intense cruelty against our forefathers who sent a man to the gallows for sheep stealing and for less kinds of larceny.

No one now, whether Catholic or Protestant, can regard the Inquisition with any other feelings than those of extreme reprobation. But we must consider the minds, particularly of the legislators of the ages when it was in use. It was made the law of the land for the avoidance of what was then thought serious evils to the commonwealth. Medieval society rested upon a foundation of religion, and that religion was the Catholic. There was no other. It had become so interwoven with the society of that time—with its habits, its customs, its occasions grave and gay, its business and its amusements—that religion could not be attacked without attacking society, and society, in defending itself, could easily be made to appear to be defending religion. Much the same condition of affairs in the modern State is to be noticed with regard to the Ten Commandments. Some of these Commandments are still knit with the moral fiber of Protestant nations. A great many of our laws are based upon them. Any infringement of them is resented by the State, not because it is the infringement of a religious law, but because it is that of a State enactment. Future ages may think that the State is wrong in this; but we can hardly imagine that any

future age will accuse the State of wanton cruelty much less of persecution because of its zeal for the Ten Commandments.

In a similar manner did the Catholic governments, while defending themselves, seem to be defending the Church. What, they thought, will be the end of all these new views on religious matters? What was their drift? What would it ultimately bring about? One thing they saw before their eyes as a consequence of the Reformation: It was causing the greatest discord and unrest among the people. But the rulers were religious enough to believe that it was doing worse than this—it was destroying the immortal souls of men. Death was the punishment for destroying the body; were they asked to destroy with less severity those who were engaged in killing the soul—that soul which Christ Himself had said was greater than a world of kingdoms and all their riches?

Be not frightened, therefore, by the great clamor that is raised by our enemies, who are ever fond of hurling the Inquisition at us. Despite the storms of opposition and the calumnies of bigotry, honest minds will judge aright and the Church shall not be the loser, for has not Christ said: *"Lo, I am with you all days even to the consumation of the world."*

XLV. SECRET SOCIETIES. FORBIDDEN BOOKS.

BY THE REV. JOHN W. SULLIVAN.

"We charge you, brethren, in the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother walking disorderly, and not according to the tradition which they have received."—II Thess. cxi, 6.

SYNOPSIS.—Warning of St. Paul that we withdraw from every brother walking disorderly, for evil companions corrupt good morals.

I. Secret Societies, Motives for joining.—1. Principles seemingly good. 2. Attraction of ritual, titles, etc. 3. Temporal advantages. 4. Beneficial element.

Answers.—1. Spiritual above temporal. 2. Example of Masons. (a) A menace to civil and ecclesiastical authority. (b) In France and Italy, no faith. 3. Church neither personal nor provincial. 4. Danger of supplanting religion—case cited. 5. Statement and theological principles. 6. Church encourages and approves all legitimate societies. 7. Need of such supplied by Knights of Columbus, etc.

II. Forbidden Books.—1. We are thinkers or repeaters—our lives ours in proportion as we think; influence of books on thought. 2. Church legislates for all. 3. Objection that reading must be done. Answer.—It must, but there is no necessity of reading books dangerous to faith and morals. (a) Effect of immoral books. (b) Effect of irreligious books—our inability to grasp or to meet their objections to religion or the doubts they raise. 4. Experience of Church. 5. Certain modern writers. 6. Encouragement of letters by Church. 7. Some Catholic authors we may profitably read. 8. Catholic weeklies, journals and magazines.

Conclusion.—Principle is faith and morals must be safeguarded—no extraordinary miracles worked by God for heedless individuals.

This command, so strongly expressed by St. Paul, can be taken in a limited sense as referring to false religions with their prayers, meetings and preaching. In a broader sense, it is an echo of Our Lord's warning, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in the clothing of sheep, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves." While the Apostle's words are not as forceful as his Divine Master's, their meaning is fully as clear.

"Withdraw yourself from every brother walking disorderly." You would withdraw yourselves from the company of drunkards and thieves. You would not associate yourselves, or suffer your children to associate with lewd persons. Nor would you seek the company of murderers. Why? Because these brethren are walking disorderly, and evil companions corrupt good morals.

It is not of these brethren I would speak. Your own sense of decency, your desire of a clean reputation, your personal responsibility, would, in most cases, preserve you from the disorderly walking with the lewd, the drunkard, the thief or the murderer. There are other brethren who are disorderly, other false prophets in sheeps' clothing, whose true character is not on the surface, whose aim is not so readily discerned, and whose influence is far more subtle. It would be a sheer impossibility to dwell on each one of these too numerous brethren. Their general features as to purpose and practice are sufficiently known. Their specific features, however, or their final aims are not easily understood, except by the few who look well into and study them most carefully.

Without doubt, the most interesting and probably the most dangerous of these brethren who "walk disorderly and not according to the tradition which they have received from us," are these two which will come under our present consideration—Secret Societies and Forbidden Books. We can at most but present the Church's attitude in regard to them, furnish one or two plain reasons justifying her position, and throw out a few suggestions for your future conduct.

The disciplinary position which the Church has, for the last two centuries maintained, touching secret societies, is a source of astonishment to the mind of the reflecting sectarian. Not unfrequently is the wisdom of her action questioned even by her loyal sons. Their non-Catholic friends who have joined the ranks of these societies find nothing wrong in the principles explained at the initiation. The elaborate ritual, the mystic emblems, titles like the Most Excellent Grand High, Most Serene Lord, gorgeous costumes, with rich ornaments and trappings, excite the imagination into a glow and the curiosity into activity. This is not frankly acknowledged, but none the less it is a subtle attraction and a powerful motive.

Men prominent in the professional, business and social worlds belong to one or another of these societies. The young man who is in daily contact with Freemasons or Odd Fellows perceives that they can assist him in the paths of his ambition. The shopkeeper sees an increase of custom, the candidate for political preferment shrewdly calculates the value of lodge influence, the lawyer and the physician seek to establish a desirable clientele. Temporal profit and advancement narrow and restrict the field of vision.

Perhaps the strongest argument preferred for membership is the

beneficial element. Care for the sick, concern for the widow and the orphans will urge men where other motives or reasons have failed.

In the face of such reasons, for the most part valid and sensible, how does the Church explain her position? Why has she assumed that position? Wherein is the wisdom of it?

Need we state that the Church ever regards the spiritual welfare of her children as of vaster importance than their temporal? Is it not of her very nature that it should be thus? With this truth held steadily before our minds we may go on to answer the question proposed.

The society of Freemasons unquestionably occupies the most prominent and influential position among the secret societies of America. By virtue of its antiquity, its action hitherto in the United States, its membership, its extension and the repute of its votaries among other fellow citizens, it enjoys a prestige all its own, and it may therefore be taken as a most practical example.

The Masons were first condemned by Clement XII. They had severed from their original aim, and were bent upon extending their privileges and adding to their possessions. Character and reputation were lost in the quest, and their orthodoxy and morality were bitterly impugned. Hence because they were universally regarded as a menace both to temporal and spiritual authority, because they had by underhand means been instrumental in the failure of the Sixth Crusade under Frederick II, because they made private treaties with the Saracens to secure their Eastern possessions, and were creating an empire within the empire, they were condemned by the Sovereign Pontiff in 1738.

Now, whatever its aim in this country at present, Freemasonry falls under the condemnation of the Church, since its members profess to hold, and do hold, fellowship with the Freemasons of Europe, where they have in France and Italy thrown aside the last vestige of religion—the belief in the existence of the Deity.

If such were the natural results of a secret society in the days when Christianity and Catholicity were synonymous, and if such are the results even in Catholic countries to-day, what may be looked for in the United States where these institutions are composed of persons of all creeds or of no creed, of persons whose love for God has waxed cold? Had there been no other reasons, these final and almost necessary effects would be enough to justify our position.

But, it may be said, the Freemasons are not in our land what they are in Europe. They do not here what they do there. They are not in any sense a political organization in the United States. This is all comforting indeed, if we are to wait with the simplicity of the dove, until they have accomplished among us all that they have accomplished on the Continent.

Let there be no question here of the members as men, let there be no attack upon any, no praise of any. The Church does not consider in themselves the character and morality of this individual or that individual.

The Church is not local, she does not legislate for one town or one province, but for the world. Her discipline may vary, but in faith and morals she is like her Divine Master, "The same yesterday, to-day and forever."

The answer of Archbishop Spalding, of Baltimore, to a Mason's letter, inquiring why the Catholic Church condemns the order, is most important, as it gives the key to the situation. "This is done," says he, "for many reasons, chief among which is the fact that Masonry is the very best human and natural counterfeit aiming to supersede our divinely revealed and supernatural religion." In other words, the Church is not so much opposed to Masonry as Masonry is opposed to the Church, for it attempts to do that for which she has been divinely commissioned.

Men naturally thirst for religion in one form or another, and the secret society, with its rites, its travesty of Christianity, its manuals or collections of sacred lessons which one might casually take to be a collection of Epistles and Gospels, is one of the means by which that thirst is satisfied.

Would it be an exaggeration to assert that the vast majority of Masons in our country deem the lodge a "good enough religion" for themselves? It would not. Many do not realize the danger or do not estimate at its true value this opposition offered to religion by the secret society habit of supplanting it in the human heart.

Consider now a concrete case on the point at issue. In 1905 one Master Mason of New York City admitted to his lodge a noted gambler. Suspension from the order was the punishment meted out for the indiscretion. A request for a charter to form a new lodge was made by him. The petition was denied. Unwilling to submit to what he regarded as harsh treatment, the master took the matter

into the Civil Courts and won his case. An appeal to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court was made by the Masonic Order. The authority of the order must be maintained, it must therefore manifest its true character. "It is unconstitutional for the civil authorities to interfere," claimed the representative of the order, as quoted in the New York *Herald.* "It is unconstitutional, for the Masonic order is a religious sect. It is a sect with its ritual, its creed, its cult, just as much a sect as the Lutherans, the Methodists, the Roman Catholics." Can aught be plainer? Is there no danger that he who joins such an order will deem it a good enough religion for himself? Is there no opposition in this to the religion of our Holy Mother, the Church?

She who maintains that she alone is the Church established by Christ, that she alone teaches what Christ taught, can not do too much to prevent her children from abandoning the one true fold, from deserting the bark of Peter which is to carry them on to salvation. She must assert her authority to check that which saps the very foundation of Catholicity, aye, of Christianity, and with it the bulwarks of law, morality and social self-restraint.

The Catholic Church condemns every society, the initiation into which is accompanied by an oath, the terms of which are unknown to the affiant, or which bind him to obey all future commands of its officers or to keep secret, as against legitimate authority, any crime committed by individual members or attempted by the society.*

There is also the most reasonable condemnation of all societies whose aim is subversive of the well being of Church or state, whether an oath be exacted or not.** The fundamental principle is that an oath, to be licit, must have three requisites, namely: truth, judgment and justice. The second of these means that the oath should be taken with discretion, prudence, consideration and reverence—not without necessity and just cause.*** This is the statement of the Church's position, and this the theological principle. Whether the society be the Freemasons, the Odd Fellows or the Knights of Pythias at present under the ban, whatever be the name of the society or the association, to all alike the statement and the principle apply.

Think not that the Church is tyrannical! She is and ever has been

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*Konings Comp. Theol. De Juramen.
** A. et D. Conc. Balt. Plen. II, Tit. XII.
***Kenrick—Theo. Mor. De Sec. Praec.

solicitous for the largest liberty of her children, consistent with sound faith and practice. She recognizes the fact that so long as men shall exist there must, in the nature of things, be partnerships, societies, alliances among individuals as surely as there must be political parties in the state. Has she ever failed to encourage those which propose no other aim than that of mutual protection and assistance, with due regard to the rights of others? "An excellent enterprise," declares Pope Leo, "is this of forming associations most varied, which spring up in these times with a prodigious fecundity on every side, and in every order of social friendship. When they are animated by a good spirit, both moral and religious, they are certainly profitable and opportune." Can our gentlemen complain that there are no suitable Catholic societies, when there is such a society as the Knights of Columbus, whose members are loyal sons of the Church, prominent in the business, the professional and the social world; a splendid organization whose aim is social and beneficial, whose purpose is mutual protection and advancement. With this society in existence our Catholics have no legitimate excuse for joining the ranks of the societies under the ban of the Church.

Know then it is an earnest solicitude for your faith, for the preservation of your holy religion, that has induced the Church to safeguard you, her children, against any and all societies whose tendency is directly or indirectly to undermine these precious gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Nor would the Church fulfill her divine mission unless she raised her voice against that other great evil, that most pernicious of all scandals, that tremendous far-reaching menace to faith and to morals—the reading of impious and dangerous books? Against these she has been most firm ever since St Paul preached at Ephesus, "When many of them who had followed curious arts, brought together their books, and burnt them before all; and counting the price of them, they found the money to be fifty thousand pieces of silver" (Acts xix, 19). No ungenerous sacrifice, it must be confessed, to make in behalf of the new faith.

There is no life without action, and the most important element in our acting is thought. Stop thinking and you rob the soul of its very life blood. Check thought and the soul's activity ceases. Our expressions, our actions, our very lives are ours in proportion as they are the outcome of our own thinking or the resolve of others.

Most of us, unfortunately, remember and repeat with far greater facility than we think. What results from this? The vast majority of us abide by the word of the hour which the few thinkers choose to give us. They put their thoughts into print, their disciples popularize the sayings of the master and question neither his principle nor the results that flow therefrom. So the world is flooded with books both good and bad. They are read, talked of, commended or condemned. Some are for the hour, some are to be the possession of all time.

Again, the Church is not local, not provincial; she legislates, on broad principles, for the world. She encourages and has encouraged letters. She brings the light to her children, she is anxious to remove the veil of darkness and ignorance. Like a prudent mother who, consulting the best interests of her offspring, forbids it to play with fire, so she says to her children: "Such and such books are inimical to your faith or to your morals; you must not read them."

"But," you object, "we must know the thought of the world, we must keep abreast of the times." In the first place, the number of books she explicity condemns is not large, and the omission of them from your list will, in no way, prevent your keeping in touch with modern intellectual work. In the next place, life is too short to permit our reading a tithe of even the safest and best productions of the hour. Think you our Holy Mother is harsh and unreasonable when she prohibits us books which we begin to read in a state of innocence and finish in a state of sin? Books that teach the young or the inexperienced a thousand disgraceful secrets; seductive and agreeable corruptors created and adorned by the perverted talents of some master to place the study of guilt within the reach of every mind and every class of society, to destroy the rising seeds of virtue in the heart, to defile the imagination with lascivious suggestions, to pervert the soul by sophisms? What is virtue or heaven or God to such writers? Will you read, will you place in the hands of your children, those authors who destroy the brightness of life's morning and leave the spirit to be consumed in the contemplation of a parched and arid waste of human nature, without good and without the freshening dews of heaven? These are the books which the Church forbids, these are the works of the brethren who walk disorderly. With them she likewise condemns those in which the doctrines and mysteries of God's holy religion are covertly or openly

ridiculed and calumniated, its pure and sublime worship represented as gross superstition, its law of love treated as fanaticism.

How few men there are sufficiently instructed to refute all the objections openly raised against religion! And fewer still are those who can detect the poison of infidelity and impiety instilled into the pages of irreligious books.

Has the lesson of the centuries taught the Church no wisdom? Have our modern notions outgrown the experience and the prudence of our aged mother? Has the rapid spread of the sixteenth century heresy taught no lesson through its literature? and in the eighteenth century was not the derision of all that is sacred due to the impious productions of French writers?

In an endless stream there flows from the printing press books that are anti-Christian in spirit, some professedly so, more cloaked under the specious guise of science and philosophy. Who shall be the watchman on the walls of Israel to warn us of the enemies' approach if it be not the divinely appointed one of Israel? We stand in need of direction in the warfare. We require someone who can point out the weakness and the dangers that beset us in our reading, for we see not the pitfalls till the harm is done.

Mrs. Humphrey Ward, George Eliot and others are read with avidity and their subtle influence is not realized till the iron is in our soul and the sweet prayers of our childhood have grown insipid. The mire of Zola and the nauseating realism of D'Annunzio leave us unclean and lower our moral standard. We learn from Sudermann and Ibsen the mere joy of life and the disenchantment of life's most sacred relations. So we sail on in our mad rush with no strong hand on the tiller, no guiding mind to save us from the shoals and the rocks till the Church has lost its attraction and we no longer think of God and have no further concern for our future. We grow heedless of the great principle that we must not expose ourselves to the pernicious influence of books which weaken our faith and our moral code, for "he that loveth the danger shall perish therein."

The aim of the Church is not to cut us off from the highest and broadest literature, but by condemning the unsafe, to lead us to shun whatever will bring no good and may cause great evil. From the works of immorality, infidelity, pessimism, from all that will cloud the mind with doubt and unrest, from all that will leave a sting and

bitterness in our thoughts and callousness in our hearts, the Church desires to protect us.

Seek out therefore the best of the classic literature, the most of it is clean and safe. Draw from the best of to-day's productions, there is more of it worth while than you will have the ability or the desire to read. The roots of English literature are struck deep in Catholic soil. Fortunately the old tree has in recent times produced some fine Catholic branches. Need we dwell on Louise I. Guiney, Charles W. Stoddard, Cardinal Newman or Father Sheehan? Need we call your attention to the broad, modern, scholarly work of Mrs. Wilfred Ward?

There is, moreover, a Catholic or religious press, and it should have our hearty co-operation. Have we subscribed for any of our well edited Catholic journals, or read them? How have we regarded our Catholic weeklies? To how many do they serve as an antidote to correct the poisonous effects of the venom of our daily press. Give a generous support to our Catholic Weeklies, Journals and Magazines, they will determine our bearing as Catholics on the daily issues, they will be signals to warn us of unsuspected and besetting dangers.

The guiding principles of the Church, then, in condemning secret societies and in forbidding unsafe books, is her overpowering desire to preserve intact our faith and morals.

Whether a society has been officially placed under the ban of the Church or not, whether a book has been placed on the Index or not, let us wisely follow her guidance and avoid any and all societies, shun each and every book that menaces, in the principles or in its results, our holy faith and our sense of the moral law.

We must all work out our own salvation in fear and trembling, and no man can assert that he has no cause for fear. Beware of pride, by which men are so blinded as to fall victims of infidelity. The wisest of kings frequented the society of idolatrous women, had his moral sense blunted and degraded himself so far as to bow before idols. Shall we boast of our strength where Solomon fell? The Lord might have protected him, even in the midst of such surroundings, but God does not perform that kind of miracles. Lot could have been saved in the midst of the fire which consumed the guilty cities of the plains; Israel could have been kept intact amid the idolatry of the Gentiles, but again, the Lord works no such miracles.

"Withdraw yourself from every brother walking disorderly" is the command, new in form, old in principle. God bade Lot go out of the doomed city. All intercourse with idolatrous nations was forbidden the Israelites. "Go out from Babylon, my people; that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues" (Apoc. xviii, 4).

Co-operation was demanded of Lot and of Israel, so to is it demanded of us. No more than they can we expect saving miracles when we rashly expose ourselves to the danger of losing the faith by refusing to withdraw ourselves from every brother walking disorderly, for "He that toucheth pitch shall be defiled with it" (Eccles. xiii, 1).

XLVI. SOCIALISM AND CHRISTIANITY.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JAMES BELLORD, D.D.

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be added unto you."—Luke xii, 31.

SYNOPSIS.—I. The prominence that Socialism is assuming in the present day world. What Socialism is. Its various forms—the material, immoral, unchristian and Christian form. The common basis of all is the dignity, equality and brotherhood of man, privileges brought by Christ into this world.

II. The relation between Religion and Socialism. 1. Religion unites man to his God, the end of his existence; hence shows him how to use temporalities in accordance with his last end. 2. The Christian religion first laid down the true principles of Socialism. Christian Socialism in the Early Church—at the present day in monasteries and convents. 3. The working out of these principles; the great effects produced.

III. Rise of Socialism consequent upon rejection of the Church and the principles laid down by her Founder. The status of the poor to-day. The remedy. Return to the proper principles as taught by the Church and the removal of false methods used by the anti-Christian Socialists.

I. There is a word in every man's mouth—a word that is full of bright visions and high hopes to multitudes weary with labor and wasted with hunger—a word that brings fear to the hearts of the prosperous and anxiety to those who bear the responsibilities of ruling, whether it be in Monarchy or Republic. It is Socialism. This is a world-wide problem of this day; it has to be taken account of in the internal politics of every country of the world. Statesmen, soldiers, philosophers, the rich and the poor have all a stake in the settlement of this question. Any one of us may be vitally concerned with it some time or other. Socialism is not simply a social or political question; it is closely connected with religious doctrines. Let us consider it by that light which enlightens all questions, so that we may be able to form a true judgment about a thing which is unduly hated by many, which raises undue hopes in more, and is misunderstood by almost all.

The political tendency in Christian countries is toward a widening of the basis of power; toward a transfer of power, and of honor, from the hands of one to many, from a few to all. At one time

power had become concentrated in the hands of one—King, Emperor, Dictator. To him the people belonged by a sort of right of ownership. He was unquestioned lord of their lives, their possessions, and even of their religious convictions sometimes. Subjects had no rights before him. Their duty was to render up all their earnings to him in taxes, their daughters to his lusts, and their lives in fighting for his personal ambition or private enmities. Two hundred years ago a king could say: "The State? I am the State." Fifty years ago another could say to an Ambassador: "Sir, there is no man of consequence in my dominions except the man I choose to speak to, and only for the time that I am speaking with him." Now we are approaching a time when the poor man, the worker, will be the depository of power. It is he who is coming now to be recognized as "the State." The only man of consideration is the man who possesses his confidence. The poor man is of importance because he is one of the great dangers of the State as at present constituted; and he is of importance and of danger because of Socialism. He is, or he soon will be, a Socialist; and Socialism means in general terms a great revolution in the established order of society, and the loss and gain of much that is valuable. Social revolution is not of necessity violent, unjust, or evil. It is the continuance of the secular movement of mankind which has been in progress since Christianity took root in Europe. Similar revolutions have already taken place, not always with those horrors which are usually associated with the name of Revolution, but peaceably, gradually, legally, under the auspices of religion. Another social revolution is in progress; its completion is only a matter of a few decades. Whether it shall be worked out with violence and end in catastrophe, or whether it shall be carried out peaceably and result in sharing the goods of this world according to each man's rights, and so unite all classes in the bonds of brotherhood, this will depend entirely on the amount of recognition accorded by the contending parties to the doctrine and law of Jesus Christ.

The word Socialism may indicate very various things. There is the Socialism which is immoral and unchristian, which declares that "Property is robbery," and which would rectify inequalities by seizing on all wealth and dividing it among all men. There is a doctrinaire Socialism, which has its plans carefully elaborated on paper without taking account of human nature. It disregards the law that a social system must be developed from the living organism of so-

ciety, and can not be manufactured brand-new for the occasion out of the brain of an amateur. Then there is the Socialism of responsible statesmen who yield bit by bit to the requirements of the multitudes. This is founded, not on any deep, true principles, but on present material interests; it proceeds sometimes on right and sometimes on wrong lines, and at the best only does imperfectly what Christianity would have done in the natural course had it not been impeded. Finally there is a Christian Socialism grounded on the equality of all men as declared by God, on brotherly love, and on the right of every man to receive a proper subsistence in return for honest labor.

There is a common idea at the base of all these forms. In a general way we may say that Socialism is the assertion of the dignity of humanity, the brotherhood and equality of all men, and the rights of labor. It would abolish these artificial classifications which have survived from a primitive form of society. It demands a share in those fruits of the earth which have been appropriated by the few who are strong, and used by them for selfish and anti-social ends. It would make every man useful in some way to society, and would say: "If any man will not work, neither let him eat" (II Thess. iii, 10). It requires that they who produce the bulk of wealth should not be arbitrarily restricted from getting some benefit from it; and that as a man has a right to his life he should also have the right to live with such comfort and decency as befits his state; and that on due conditions a man should have a share in the gifts of God to men, in the earth as well as in the fresh air and the sunshine. The watchwords of Socialism are liberty, equality and fraternity; three privileges brought by Jesus Christ to men, but suppressed by the strong for their own aggrandizement. These I take to be the fundamental ideas in all that is called Socialism; these I shall mean, in their Christian aspect, when I speak of Socialism.

These ideas have been germinating in the minds of men for a century and a half at least; and now they are bearing fruit, partly good and partly bad. A general movement is in progress for ameliorating the condition of the weaker classes, and releasing them from the tyranny of capital and from virtual slavery. The Catholic Church through the Sovereign Pontiff, and bishops, and laymen, is the guiding spirit of this movement. On the other hand, schemes have been devised for overthrowing the social system, or patching it up without the aid of Christianity; absurd ideals have been set up, de-

structive errors have been made, brutal threats have been uttered, and these have discredited the legitimate aspirations of social reformers. But it is only the methods that are at fault. We ought to disregard the superficial and accidental extravagances and seek for the true idea which must necessarily exist in any universal movement of the human mind.

II. Some persons no doubt will ask what religion can have to do with a matter which is entirely political and social,—a matter of mere external organization and distribution of material wealth. Why should the Church interfere with this more than with excise regulations or town drainage? 1. It is true this is not the direct work of Christianity. Its first object is to reveal divine truth to us, and cleanse us from sin, and guide us to heaven. When a certain one said to Our Lord: "Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me," He made answer: "Man, who hath appointed me judge or divider over you?" (Luke xii, 14). But none the less did the teaching of Our Lord influence social and commercial arrangements. He laid down certain great truths and laws, and we have to guide the whole of our lives by these. There is no revelation about forms of government, or colonization, or trading; the laws of hygiene, and of supply and demand do not belong to the moral or the spiritual order; yet even here we have to be guided by the religious laws of justice and benevolence, and by the remembrance that the ultimate end of all human action is the glory of God and the salvation of souls. We require the blessing of God on our temporal as well as our spiritual affairs, on public as well as on private life, in order to ensure a happy result; and, if we would gain this blessing, it is necessary that we conform ourselves to the law revealed to us in religion. A social revolution has been in progress during the whole of the Christian era. Under the influence of religion each step was accomplished gradually and peaceably, without disturbing established order. So took place the abolition of slavery first, and then of serfage; the formation of Christendom out of untutored hordes of barbarians, the establishment of popular liberties. The changes that are now threatening are not more extreme than those which are past, and they ought to be equally beneficial to society in general. But unchristian methods of advocacy, and unchristian methods of opposition, have between them created dangers which do not belong to these changes themselves.

2. Besides this general connection of Christianity with social af-

fairs, there is also a special connection with Socialism. The principles expressed by Socialists had their first origin in Christianity. The object aimed at is not very different from that which is proposed in the Gospel in general terms. Such errors as there may be in contemporary Socialism are mostly in the details by which men seek to reduce the principles to practice. Christianity does not supply the working details, but it originated the ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity; it has given us the truth which makes us free (John vii, 32); it has brought us into "the liberty of the glory of the children of God" (Rom. viii, 21), it acknowledges no distinction of nationality and respect for persons, it declares fraternal charity to be the "bond of perfection" and the "fulfilling of the law" (Col. iii, 14; Rom. xiii, 10).

The immediate effect of these principles was the birth of a voluntary Socialism in the early Church. "All they that believed were together, and had all things in common. Their possessions and goods they sold, and divided them all, according as every one had need" (Acts ii, 44-45). This was carried on and developed by the hermits in their deserts, and later in the monasteries and convents. In these there was perfect equality. All worldly inequalities were obliterated; there was no distinction but that of the necessary offices, conferred by election on account of special capacity. Any one might rise to the highest position. All worked for the community, and the community awarded to each what was sufficient, and supported its members in age and illness. All property was in common. They were submissive, as social order demands; but this was a supreme exercise of Christian liberty, subduing self and will to the law of perfection in Jesus Christ, and giving them mastery over those passions which are the tyrants of men.

This is the highest ideal of Christian life. The Church has never put it forward as necessary, or even as useful for all mankind; it would be inconsistent with certain of the duties that must be performed by the majority of men, and it involves a sacrifice of natural rights which can not be commanded but must be spontaneous. But there is nothing to be said against those who would take certain features of the ideal Christian society, train men to see their advantages, and adapt them by legal means to the conditions of every-day life. In such a work the Catholic Church must be the principal authority and guide. She has real experience of Socialism in its religious form; she has evolved a system which has succeeded per-

fectly; and she can judge dispassionately of the limitations which must be placed upon it in order to guard natural rights. Irresponsible amateurs, however full of the enthusiasm of humanity, however indignant at human wrongs, can never have practical wisdom to devise, or power to establish a new social system, without the aid of that Church which alone founded, and still chiefly inspires, western civilization.

3. There is still more in the spirit and the legislation of the Church that favors the Socialist's ideals of the equality and brotherhood of all men, and restrains excessive accumulation by the powerful to the disadvantages of the weaker classes. (1) The Church admits no distinction of person before the altar of God. It would be abhorrent to her to fence off a part of a church like a cage, for human beings, to separate inferiors from their betters, and degrade them even at prayer. (2) The Church taught the wealthy that they held their property in trust for God and the poor. St. Philip Neri said, "The rich man is the natural prey of the poor." (3) She encouraged these grand works of munificence, so seldom imitated now, by which enormous amounts of property were given over for the benefit of the poor or the general community. (4) The wasteful consumption of wealth for selfish uses was at times restrained by sumptuary laws. It is an antiquated contrivance, but it suited the times and served a very useful purpose. (5) The stringent laws against interest on money lent, unsuitable to an age of vast and intricate commercial dealings, were necessary to protect the small landowner from being enslaved and devoured by swindling usurers. (6) There were laws, too, against forestalling; against those great monopolies of some article which are found so effectual at the present day for the heaping up of sudden and enormous fortunes and which will dislocate trade, destroy confidence, ruin many, and reduce the small earnings of the poor. (7) Further, the Church secured fair treatment for the working classes by organizing labor in religious guilds and by pointing out the grievous sin of oppressing the poor, defrauding laborers of their wages, and taking advantage of the extreme necessity of others to one's own profit. (8) Finally there was the continual impulse to self-sacrifice in the service of the needy, which induced multitudes to devote their whole lives to it; and the insistence on the necessity of almsgiving transferred to the poor a large share in these goods and fortune which they could not earn for themselves.

III. It is obvious that if these provisions of the Church's law were carried out constantly and on a large scale, they would so far ameliorate the condition of the poor as to leave them little cause for complaining against the unequal division of temporal goods. It was this kind of teaching, slowly filtering down through all the strata of society, that worked the great social revolutions of the earlier ages; and it would have gone on with its work of social development if it had not been checked in later centuries by the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the anti-Christian elements in modern Revolution. But the Christian Church has had to fight for bare existence; she has been almost overwhelmed by persecution and heresy, infidelity and corruption; her field of labor has been ramaged, her work interrupted and carried on piecemeal and almost by stealth in different countries.

It was the weak and the poor who suffered principally by these catastrophies; for the Church was always their friend and protector, and it was they who profited chiefly by the restraints on selfishness, extravagance and greed for wealth. Their condition has been and is actually growing worse and worse with frightful rapidity. They have lost the share in social advantages which Christianity assured to them, and at the same time they have lost those spiritual advantages of belief and prayer which are the only real comfort in temporal misfortunes. Their lot has fallen far below what is endurable, and hence the fierce hatred and threatened revolt against the system of society which has crushed them. Ignorant alike of Christian and economical laws and their restraints, conscious of bitter wrongs, taught that utility, *i. e.*, gross selfishness is the law of progress, and that life is a struggle to maintain oneself by crushing others, the multitudes, having long suffered under these principles are now using them for their own advantage. Socialism in various perverted forms is the means proposed to them; and they welcome any form of it, however impracticable or unchristian, if only it promises to redress the balance and restore to them their rightful inheritance.

Socialism in some form is not of itself necessarily unchristian or anti-social, but only in some of those vagaries which beset every great movement, and which fall aside as fuller light is cast on the subject. But it is an uprising of the popular conscience against those false maxims of the world which have obscured certain great religious truths. It is an incoherent demand for certain Christian

rights which have been set aside by pride of race, and of class, and by the inordinate desire of riches. Unfortunately, in many instances, it is an attempt to realize the results of Christianity without the spirit of Christianity. It sometimes seeks to establish by paper organization and minute rules those relations between men which can only proceed from heart transformed by faith, and generosity, and justice, into the likeness of Jesus Christ. It is a stirring in the right direction, but unfortunately by the wrong methods. We should show pity to the disinherited for what they have lost, sympathy with their efforts to recover it, and give practical aid in pointing out their errors and helping them to better methods.

The Church of Christ has a double function. It is a great religious force and is a great social force. It regulates our relations to God, and through them our relations with our earthly surroundings. The spiritual message has been rejected by large bodies as being opposed to immediate material interests and the pleasures of the passions. But the message of social regeneration has retained its hold on all men, and they are constantly endeavoring, though blindly, to realize it. It is their misfortune to be ignorant that social order is the branch, and that religion is the trunk of the tree from which it springs, and that Our Lord Jesus Christ is the root. Hence it is that so many well-meant experts fail to establish harmony of classes, agreement of different races, proper distribution of wealth, secure governments of liberty without license, authority without tyranny. The same error would nullify any schemes of social reform, and perhaps make them more noxious to society than the evils they are expected to cure. The rapid extension of the Catholic Church and the renewal of her vigor, together with the prominent action of the Sovereign Pontiffs in social matters, give us reason to hope that the evolution of the former social system will be in accordance with the divine law and the spirit of Jesus Christ. This alone will insure its success. For it is true not only of the spiritual edifice, but also of the social edifice, that Our Lord Jesus Christ "is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other. For there is no other name under heaven given to men whereby we must be saved" (Acts iv, 11, 12).

XLVII. SUPERSTITION IN PRACTICES OF FAITH.

BY THE REV. THOS. F. BURKE, C.S.P.

SYNOPSIS.—I. The word superstition. Its meaning among non-Catholics and among Catholics. False notions. Natural superstitions.

II. We are to consider those superstitions that sometimes intrude themselves into practices of faith. Possibility of this sin does not argue to its prevalence.

III. Superstition in the abuse of sacramentals.

IV. Superstition in the abuse of the principle of saintly intercession.

V. Superstition in unlawful attempts to probe into the future.

VI. Conclusion.—The principle, observance of which will render superstition impossible.

1. Superstition is a word that has been much tampered with, because it can be made to mean so many things. Its meaning depends largely upon the viewpoint of the speaker or writer. To the unbeliever, for example, all Christians in their beliefs and religious customs are superstitious. To the Christian who is not a Catholic, the man who believes in the Real Presence of Christ, who bends the knee before the Blessed Sacrament, who prays before the images of the saints, who wears the scapular, who honors the crucifix, is superstitious. All may agree upon the technical definition of the word, but, outside the Catholic Church there are many varieties in the interpretation of that definition, because there are many varieties of belief.

As a matter of fact, too, the word is used even among Catholics both in a broader and narrower sense. In the former acceptance of the word it signifies all false worship, whether the error be found to lie in the object to which honor is given or in the incorrect manner of worshiping the true God. The heathen, amid the wilds of the uncivilized portions of the earth or in the unchanged civilizations of the past, bowing before his idols of wood and stone or honoring with divine worship the celestial orb of light is, in a true and real sense, guilty of superstition. Likewise, the believer in the true God, who worshiping God, nevertheless refuses to worship in the manner prescribed by God Himself as indicated in His own Word or in the voice of His Church, is rightly considered guilty of superstition.

With the consideration of the sin in this sense we are not at present concerned, nor are we concerned with those objections against the Catholic faith which are made by men who wrongly call superstitions those beliefs and practices which we know to be sanctioned by God and the teachings of the Church and reason itself. Nor is it our intention to concern ourselves with those remnants of paganism, those natural superstitions which are found the world over in many popular and local customs. They are none the less to be condemned; none the less to be eradicated from our lives. Oftentimes the very one who is all too ready to detect superstition in the devotion of a soul to its patron saint, will give a perhaps unconscious and perhaps unprofessed assent to the very commonest of superstitious ideas. To consider Friday an unlucky day, or as a day unfit for the starting of a journey; to refuse to be one of thirteen to sit at a table; to consider it unlucky to break a mirror; to place a horseshoe over the door for good luck; to find in charms, such as a four-leaved clover, assurances of good fortune, these are but a few of the multitude of superstitions in which the popular fancy indulges and which are unworthy of an intelligent being.

2. Rather we are to consider those superstitions which may at times accompany practices of faith. Such superstitions are the degeneration of true belief; they are the excrescences of faith itself. They argue not the absence of faith, but rather its presence, and also its abuse. It is not useless that we should be warned against them, for it is ever incumbent upon us to keep our religion pure and undefiled. As it is necessary to remove the growths that cling to the hull of a vessel, that the vessel itself may not suffer injury nor its usefulness and speed be affected, so is it required that we keep the ship of faith free from those abuses that would degrade and defile it.

We may say that superstition consists in ascribing to created things powers which they do not possess, either by nature or in virtue of the prayers of the Church. With this definition kept clearly and substantially before our minds, we can see how, unless they realize constantly the prerogatives of God and the supernatural character of religion, some of the faithful may fall into superstitious practices. It must be borne in mind, however, that while we admit the possibility of this sin among the faithful, we by no means admit it to be so general as many of the opponents of the Church would say. Many have not hesitated to charge whole peoples with it;

but such a charge is unfounded and springs either from prejudice or ignorance. As a rule it is from a lack of knowledge that the charge is begotten. Mistaking the true character of the peoples in question, mistaking their familiarity with religious things for a contempt of religious things, mistaking their expressions of fervid devotion for sinful exaggerations, mistaking the outward act and demeanor for the expression of something which does not really exist within the soul, these objectors jump at conclusions which are anything but complimentary to the subjects they dissect. We speak not therefore of seeming superstition, but of that superstition which is real and therefore sinful, a thing which is as much condemned by God as is the sin of theft or of adultery.

3. There are some phases of Catholic practice and devotion in which, more than others, this perversion of faith which is called superstition is liable to appear. The first of these, at which we may glance, is the matter of the sacramentals. These are in themselves useful and proper; but that they may be both, they must be employed with a knowledge of their character and of the object for which they are sanctioned. Christ Himself instituted certain means of grace, means that infallibly impart grace of the Holy Spirit to the soul when they are sought with the necessary conditions fulfilled. These we call Sacraments. To attribute to any of the sacramentals a power such as the Sacraments possess would be superstition, for it is from the prayers of the Church and not directly from God that these means of devotion derive their value. The blessing used by the priest in setting apart certain things thus rendered sacred, is given in the name of the Church and does not take to itself any power that is divine. The sign of the Cross, the crucifix, the rosary, the scapular, medals, the ashes at the beginning of Lent, the palms on Palm Sunday, all these have their legitimate purposes, good and holy. They serve to incite devotion; to increase, when lawfully employed, the love of God in the soul; to fulfil the special purposes for which they were instituted by the Church; but when some attribute them to a greater efficacy than they possess in the mind of the Church or could possess, they are guilty of giving to them a superstitious value. Let us cite a few abuses sometimes found among those who are indeed filled with faith, but who in certain practices go to a sinful excess. To wear, for example, a crucifix or a medal or the scapular in the belief that it is a kind of charm that will of itself protect the wearer from harm, from death by accident, or fire,

or drowning and so on, is nothing short of superstition. It is seen that not the wearing of these but the wearing of them with the wrong intention is what makes the sin. They have their legitimate purposes, and when the wearer is in thorough accord with these they serve rather as helps than hindrances to the true spirit of devotion and religion. We can not be too careful in such matters, for to allow such practices to degenerate into customs akin to the idolatries and superstitions of the pagans is to bring ridicule and contumely upon the true Religion from those who are but too ready to detect flaws and to attribute them to the Church itself. At the same time it would be the height of cowardice and folly to sacrifice one jot or tittle of the time-honored devotions or sacred customs or holy things that have been sanctioned by the Church and are in thorough accord with the natural and reasonable demands of the soul.

4. Another principle of Catholic faith which, through its abuse, sometimes has degenerated, in individual cases, and may at times degenerate into superstition, is that of the intercession of the saints. Our belief in this matter is as simply stated as it is thoroughly reasonable. We look upon the holy ones of God, who have fought the battle of life unto victory, who live with Christ in heaven, as souls who can pray for us, who can intercede with God for our welfare. If we do not hesitate to ask those upon earth, and especially those who lead good lives, to pray for us; if the prayer of the just man, even in the time of our earthly pilgrimage, availeth much, surely it is not a violation of any right of God nor a derogation from His powers to suppose that the saints may likewise pray for us. Superstition however arises from attributing to the saints a power that is the possession of God alone and from the expectation that they personally will grant favors and answers to petitions which it is within the power of Divinity alone to bestow. Many spurious prayers are circulated in which the language is such that it can be considered only as fostering superstition. When we are told, for example, that the recital of such a prayer, or its recital at fixed times, or a special number of times or days, will infallibly obtain from the saint to whom it is addressed the favor asked; when it is believed that the swallowing of papers containing the pictures of the Blessed Virgin or another of the saints will infallibly work a cure of disease; when we are informed that certain extravagant and impossible promises will be infallibly fulfilled through

prayers to the saints, we are, beyond doubt, in the region of superstition, for such things are nothing but the giving to creatures that which is the prerogative of God alone. Lately, I remember meeting an instance of this kind which will serve as a warning. A prayer was circulated with preposterous conditions attached. The recipient was to recite the prayer a fixed number of times, but further, was to send it to nine other persons with the same instructions. These details were to be followed under penalty of dire punishment if not performed. This is nothing but the grossest superstition and should be, with all things like it, discountenanced and discouraged by every Catholic that loves his faith and his Church.

5. Divine power, again, is attributed to things created, and consequently there exists the sin of superstition, when from other sources than God Himself a knowledge of the future is sought. The future belongs to God and to God alone. He may reveal it, and may reveal it in any manner He pleases. There can be no question, judging from historical incidents and facts in the lives of the saints and in the records of religion from the beginning, that God has sometimes made known things beyond the present. Nor would it be sinful for anyone to seek such a knowledge from God, if it be sought with spiritual motives and for the sake of the soul. When, however, it is sought in any other way, the seeker is guilty of superstition. One of the prevalent practices of this sort, existing among the educated as well as the uneducated classes, is the consultation of fortune-tellers, who, by this or that means, profess to be able to reveal the future of our lives. The mysterious probing into time yet unborn, to bring forth its products, seems to have a fascination for many minds and to lead them easily astray from the dictates of common sense. It is this craving for the knowledge of the future that leads people to consult not only the fortune-teller, but also the mediums of spiritism and other vagaries. It is just here, in the midst of the subtle workings of the human mind that is ever seeking the solution of the mysterious, that there is evident the need of an authoritative voice to say what are and what are not the proper methods to be employed in the search. It is because of the absence of such an authority outside the Church that we find that these forms of superstition are far more prevalent among non-Catholics than among Catholics. In the divinely instituted Church, appointed by Christ to be the palpable spiritual guide for man upon earth, we have a protecting power that secures us and guards us from errors

that might otherwise attract. And it is this very thing that renders delinquencies of this character graver when committed by the Catholic than when indulged in by those who have no teacher upon whom they may depend. The spiritual knowledge given, the spiritual care bestowed, the numerous means for spiritual advancement sanctioned by the Catholic Church are all-sufficient for the life of the soul. To the one that appreciates all these at their full worth, and that uses them in the proper way, there is no need of the superstitious invention of the human mind.

6. In this consideration of the subject we have but touched upon some of the sins of this class against the virtue of faith; nor is more necessary. For, after all, there is but question of one of the very fundamental principles of religion. If that principle be duly understood, and there is nothing simpler, there need be no danger of the sin. The principle is that the power which belongs to God alone must not be attributed to a creature. The earth, all created nature of itself gives glory to God; and as such may be used by man to express his worship for his Maker. But nature and all things thus employed must be truly subservient to the idea of worship, the internal sense of worship, existent in the soul and heart of man. As the love of one human being for another which has its home within and may be properly expressed in outward action, degenerates into sin when expressed in an inordinate manner, so too our worship of the true God, while having its legitimate external manifestation, sinks into the basest superstition when it is externalized in unseemly and improper ways.

Knowing the true principles and aware of the dangers of degeneration in worship, it is for us, each and all, to keep within our own souls, and to secure from others, a great respect for our faith, by preserving it altogether free from superstitious practices.

XLVIII. THE UNIVERSAL FITNESS OF THE CHURCH.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JAMES BELLORD, D.D.

"In the days of these kingdoms the God of Heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, and his kingdom shall not be delivered up to another people, and it shall break in pieces and shall consume all these kingdoms, and itself shall stand forever."—Dan. ii, 44.

SYNOPSIS.—I. The king's dream; its interpretation; its fulfilment.

II. Change and progress leading to decay and death a law of nature, e. g., all human institutions, all philosophies. Progress in the manifestation of God's Providence to man.

III. The world now in the stage of manhood. Further developments sure to come in the physical order. Christ's Church final as seen from its character; the prophecies and words of institution. It possesses the Holy Spirit and Christ Himself, therefore it is adaptable to the needs of all nations and of all times.

IV. The mission of the Church brings with it the grace to fulfil that work. No new and continuous miracle needed. Just the action of its God-given nature. History as well as Scripture a very strong proof that the Catholic Church is the Church of God. Comparison with Mahomedanism and Buddhism. The Church does not enslave the ignorant children of her flock. One conclusion. She is supported by God.

I. Long ages ago a great king of the East, Nabuchodonosor, was thinking on his bed of what should come to pass in the future, and it pleased God to reveal it to him in a vision. There appeared before him a great figure of terrible aspect; its head was of fine gold, the breast and the arms of silver, the belly and thighs of brass, the legs of iron, the feet half iron and half clay. Then a stone cut without hands from a mountain struck the statue, which immediately crumbled into dust and was carried away by the wind; the stone grew into a mountain and filled the whole earth. According to the explanation of the prophet Daniel the figure represented the great empires of antiquity, and the stone was to be a great, eternal and universal kingdom established by God Himself. That kingdom was to be in this world, and yet not of this world; for all that is of this world must of necessity pass away. The Catholic Church alone fulfils the prophecy. There have been other kingdoms of almost worldwide extent, but they have not endured. Only one has been at the same time universal, and permanent, and established by the hand of God;

that one is the Catholic Church, and it stands without a competitor.

Five centuries after that vision the Son of God came on earth. He established His kingdom, and declared the fulfilment of the old prophecy in terms that correspond to those used by Daniel. His Church was to be the sole one. "There shall be one fold and one shepherd" (John x, 16). It was to be for every land: "Going therefore teach ye all nations" (Matt. xxviii, 19). It was to last forever: "Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world" (Matt. xxviii, 20). It was to be proof against the destructive forces of violence, falsehood and corruption: "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. xvi, 18).

These prerogatives constitute the Catholicity, *i. e.*, the universality of the Church, which is one of the four great marks by which she is designated in prophecy and distinguished in history. Of all the qualities of the Church of Jesus Christ this one is so pre-eminent and so markedly her own, that it has given her the name by which she is known in the world. While others are called the church of this or that country, or named after their founders, like Mahomedanism and Calvinism, the proper name of Christ's Church, the name which ephemeral sects have vainly tried to wrest from her, has always been the Universal Church, *i. e.*, the Catholic Church.

The accomplishment of Daniel's prophecy is grand and imposing as the vision of the great king which he interpreted. Nabuchodonosor was stricken with awe and troubled in mind when he saw the stone, cut without hands, destroy the statue and fill the whole earth. The foes of the Catholic Church would do well to imitate him, to consider the wonderful facts before them, and inquire into their meaning. The universal existence of the Church is the greatest historical fact in the period between the Ascension of Our Lord and the present day. Wherever the student of the past roves in his investigations the Church is ever before him, like an all-pervading presence. In every great question of our own days, the philosopher, the statesman, the man of science, meet the Catholic Church face to face, and have to reckon with her. In every land the Church has taken root and flourished, not with the artificial life of the exotic, but as if a native of the climate and a product of the soil. The path of history leads us through countless ruins and the graves of the mighty dead. Not only the empires seen by Nabuchodonosor, but many others have grown, held sway, and fallen into

darkest oblivion. The dominion of a line of kings or of some great republic has run on for a thousand years till men thought it well-nigh immortal, and then has vanished like a cloud in the summer sky. Languages have died out, civilizations have come to maturity, disappeared before a flood of barbarism, and revived again. Races of men have passed away. New worlds have been created by discovery and the overflow from old countries. Again and again the whole aspect of the earth has been renewed. And while all things come and go, one majestic figure remains, surviving all catastrophes, the same under every sky, speaking the language of every nation, yet compelled to have one language of her own, on account of her own universal unchanging existence and the changing forms of all things else. This grandeur of the Church has forced an enemy to acknowledge in one of the best known passages of English literature, that she will live on when the greatest works of our civilization have crumbled to dust. In the same sense we may apply the words of the psalmist: "They shall perish but thou remainest; and all of them shall grow old as a garment; and as a vesture thou shalt change them and they shall be changed. But thou art always the self-same and thy years shall not fail. The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be directed for ever" (Ps. ci, 27-29).

So far we have been considering the material Universality of the Church, the mere fact of her existence in all times and all places. This is only one aspect of the matter, and it would be of little account were not the Church universal in another and a higher sense, in the sense of enjoying a special fitness and suitableness to every age, every race, and every country of the world. This is the most important element in the Catholicity of the Church; it is a more evident argument of her divinity than even her world-wide existence; it places her more decisively outside the class of simply human institutions.

II. The natural course of all things in this world is to grow vigorously for a time till they reach their prime to do their work, and then fall into decrepitude, decay and extinction. Long before they actually leave the world of existence they have virtually left it by becoming unfit for their purpose, useless and obstructive. All living things have in them the seeds of dissolution. But there is a force outside them which is more fatal still, and that is the always active principle of Progress. The world goes on and leaves them

behind. This is a sacred law impressed on the world by its Creator; it is a law of life and at the same time a cause of death. In order that life may go on continuously, whether in the material universe, or in the world of human society, in order to prevent stagnation, which would be death, there must be changes; those things that have done their work must be moved out of the way, other beings must come forth adapted to the new conditions; these keep pace for awhile with the general life, and then in turn lag behind and die. No earthly thing can keep up with progress; nothing can stem its advance; nothing can resist the destruction which it brings. So does the sun maintain the continuity of vegetation by ever giving life and inflicting death. Its light and warmth call forth each spring new generations of flowers, which day by day increase in size and beauty. But the unfaltering daily course of the sun, and its increasing heat are too much for the endurance and frail life of the flower; it can not keep up the race; and long before the first blasts of winter it has withered and dropped from its stalk, scattered by the same sunbeams which had charmed it into life.

Of all human institutions, however venerable by age and origin, however protected by the reverence of mankind, not one is immortal. Forms of government and systems of philosophy, the conjectures of science and habits of life, all are constructions of the human mind and are subject to its limitations. They are adapted to wants and tastes that are changeable, and are inspired by men's knowledge of things as they are at present, and not as they will be in days to come. The times march rapidly, the world grows daily wiser and more exacting, and things which suit the requirements of one age fail to meet those of the next. Everything must submit to continual improvements in order to be kept efficient; one bit of the machine after another must be replaced, till at last nothing of the original remains. When this can no longer be done the machine becomes useless, it is condemned, and must be broken up.

So universal, so irresistible is this law of human progress, that even the dealings of God's Providence with men have had to pass through successive stages of perfection. For twenty centuries mankind was under the natural law handed down by family tradition from Adam. There was no code of precept committed to writing, no ceremonial law defining methods of worship. Conscience was each man's guide. The head of the family or tribe was the religious as well as civil ruler; he gave the laws, he offered sacrifice according to

his own discretion. As men became more numerous tribes were combined into nations, a larger organization became necessary, and religion had to keep pace with social progress. A written revelation was given, a special priesthood appointed, the forms of worship carefully laid down. That dispensation lasted another two thousand years. The Israelites had become a nation, and obtained a land for their abode. At first ruled by God through the priesthood, then by judges who raised themselves to eminence by their talents, the country became a monarchy; then a kind of republic, and at last a province of the Roman Empire. At length the whole system was worn out and left behind as mankind progressed. Universal corruption prevailed throughout the world, and all nations looked for a Redeemer to begin a new era. The time arrived for a crisis both in the natural and the supernatural order. Jesus Christ came and renewed the face of the earth; He overthrew the old system, and founded a new religion. He commenced a New Testament, a new dispensation, a new order in the dealings of Divine Providence with mankind. An entirely new set of ideas were planted in the human race; these were the germs of new institutions, of a new commencement in human progress, and they mark a definite, broad separation in history between two worlds, the ancient and the modern. From that time there has been a regular advance, always on the same lines, a steady growth of one and the same spirit; although with many checks and occasional temporary or local retrogression.

III. We have now arrived at the chief era, and in a sense the final era, of the world's existence. After passing through the periods of childhood and youth, the world is now in the stage of manhood. It has received from God all that it needs for working out its destiny; there are no new forces to be communicated to it of revealed truth, of divine example, of grace. How far advanced the world is in manhood, how long it yet has to run, we can not judge. But we may safely assume that it has yet a considerable course before it, and many triumphs to achieve in its progress. Great as are the wonders we have seen, there are probably still greater yet to come. Every power wrested by man from nature serves as an instrument to extract still more from the great treasures which God has imbedded in the deep recesses of the universe. Great changes in the order of human life must follow necessarily on the greater knowledge and greater power gained. Much that

we have now will become antiquated, and must pass away somehow or other, perhaps by gradual replacement, perhaps by violent and destructive revolutions. An epoch of rapid progress means a more rapid succession of life, and death, and life again.

And what of the Catholic Church? Will the bark of Peter be left high and dry on the banks, to bleach and drop to pieces while the torrent of progress rushes on? Must Christianity be transformed to suit the new requirements of mankind? Or must it perhaps be replaced by a totally new religion? Outside the Catholic Church most men are convinced that one or other of these things must happen. The members of the various separated sects are setting their houses in order under pressure of necessity. They feel themselves out of harmony with the age, and so are revising their confessions of faith, reconsidering their position, trying to amalgamate, and splitting up still further; they are shedding unpopular doctrines and thereby making all connected doctrines untenable; or, as in some cases, picking up fragments of Catholic truth previously rejected, and trying to piece them again into their decaying garments.

The charter of God's kingdom in the new era makes it evident that that kingdom was not to be subject to the law which makes all things else deteriorate, and grow antiquated, and die. Christ's religion is not such as the Jewish, not a mere temporary expedient for one stage of human progress, a preparation for something better, a type of things to come. The prophecies and the words of institution used by our Lord indicate that the new religion was to be complete and final. It is the fulfilment of all figures; it is the new Jerusalem, whose gates are to stand open day and night forever to welcome the multitude of the Gentiles; its sun shall go down no more, and its moon shall not decrease, for the Lord shall be unto it for an everlasting light; in it, the true house of Jacob, the Messias shall reign forever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end; it shall see the end of all other kingdoms, and itself shall stand forever; the kingdom of God will never be taken away from it and transferred to another; the Holy Ghost will teach it all truth, and the kings to come He will show it. Such a Church can need no remodeling, no replacing by another, no alteration or pruning down in matters of doctrine. In itself, in the eternal possession of the Holy Spirit and Our Lord Jesus, it has that which adapts it to every

age of the world, and enables it to carry out its appointed work forever.

IV. It is a law of Providence that when God lays a duty on anyone He gives the grace and power to fulfil it. Moses represented his natural incapacity and was reproved by God; the prophet Jeremias also, and the Lord answered him: "Say not, I am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee to; and whatsoever I shall command thee thou shalt speak" (Jer. i, 7). If the office of the Church requires qualities that no other institution possesses we may be assured that God will give them. The chief requirement in a Universal Church is that it should be adapted in character to all the nations that it has to teach, that it should not be inferior to them in advancement, not incapable of guiding, not unworthy of their veneration. Can we imagine God setting over men an authority that was unfit to influence them? Could He give the Church a universal existence and universal authority without giving it the necessary accompaniment of universal fitness? Could He appoint a supreme guide to hold His place on earth, and yet allow it to grow old, enfeebled, opposed to the due progress of humanity, and noxious instead of useful to men? This would be indeed keeping the letter of the promises and violating their spirit; this would indeed be giving the children stones when they asked for bread. It is blasphemy to suppose such a thing.

It is incredible that God should maintain in existence by miraculous power a Church which He had destined to be incapable of doing the work of a Church. It would be an anomaly. It would be a more extraordinary miracle than the gift of perpetual life to the Church if God withheld from it the gift of perpetual fitness for all times. It would be giving with one hand and taking away with the other, to grant life without that which enabled the life to accomplish its object. If God has the power to preserve the Church in continual existence, He can as easily preserve it in a state of efficiency. If the Church has vitality enough to resist the ravages of time and the assaults of the world and Satan, it is to be presumed that it has vitality enough to keep abreast of human progress.

In order to arrive at this conclusion it is not necessary to appeal to the promises of Holy Scripture, or the presence of God in the Church. Catholics know that their Church is in harmony with progress because God is with it; but the mere existence of the Church is sufficient evidence to non-Catholics that, whether the Church be

of God or not, it is at any rate not opposed to human wants and human advancement. We have already seen its power of progress; it sweeps on ruthlessly through the centuries carrying all before it; all things must go with it or be destroyed. It is impossible to obstruct it for long together; the longer such resistance continues and the more successful it may seem to be, so much greater will be the catastrophe when destruction comes. If anything is found existing, and flourishing and gaining ground, as is the Catholic Church, we may be certain that it is not obstructive and unprogressive. It must be fundamentally in accord with the spirit of progress, however loudly this be denied by factious opponents. If the Catholic Church be really what her enemies say, if she be an effete, worn-out, retrogressive, pernicious system, how can they account for the fact that she exists and prospers as she does? History affords no example of such a thing. Dying institutions may linger long and struggle fiercely, but the signs of their decrepitude are evident, and they must surely go; they do not renew their youth like the eagle, as the Church is ever doing, nor do they go on increasing steadily in bulk and in vigor, in influence, and in the respect of mankind. Such an exceptional fact must have an exceptional cause. In the ordinary course of events an obsolete system, such as the Catholic Church is said to be, could not possibly have survived through so many centuries of irresistible progress. There is but one alternative. Only the miraculous power of God could keep such a Church alive in defiance of the laws of the universe, and as we have seen, such a miracle is not to be expected.

Our opponents try to escape from this conclusion. They bring up various forms of fanaticism like Mahomedanism and Buddhism, which have not only survived through ages, but have commenced to revive anew in this century. But it is to be remarked that these survivals or revivals do not take place in the presence of the progress of the nineteenth century. A worthless system of religion or government may go on indefinitely while it is fenced in rigidly from contact with the outer world. But as soon as it comes face to face with civilization it withers up and dies. So have the great Mahomedan empires died of inanition; so are the ancient religions of India dying by the hand, not of conquest, but of education; so, too, Japan, when after two thousand years of seclusion it was opened to the world, saw the necessity of changing at once all its institutions; thus it saved its national life, instead of allowing it to be trampled

out of existence in a vain struggle with progress. The Catholic Church has never lived in that seclusion which lengthens the life of worn-out institutions beyond their proper span. She is never outside the influence of the advancing tide of humanity; at times she has led it; she has always been in the midst of it. Her rulers have always been men of intellect and cultivation; her schools have always led the way in education; her influence has always been dominant in literature, law, science and social reforms. She has flourished among surroundings that would have overwhelmed and destroyed her had she ever been really behind her age.

Another calumny is that the Church maintains her influence by crushing the intelligence, enslaving the soul, tyrannizing over the weak and ignorant. It is an utter impossibility. There were times when this could be done, but they have passed away. Protestantism and Mahomedanism, armed with the power of fire and sword, were able, in certain quarters of the world, to extinguish for a time the Catholic faith; but their dominion failed as soon as modern freedom, and general intercourse, and criticism came into being. A tyranny over one nation has become impossible in these days of progress; the military power of the greatest monarchy could not maintain it; the most backward of starving populations would not endure it. It is inconceivable that any institution, especially one with no coercive power of wealth or the sword, should be able, in this nineteenth century, to hold down by fraud or tyranny a world-wide community, embracing men of every character, of every nation, of every pursuit, men of knowledge and shrewdness, and above all imbued with the sense of freedom and the consciousness of their rights.

The persons who think that such explanations account for the phenomenon which the Catholic Church presents, must either believe that she has a magical power more exorbitant than any Catholic claims for her, or they must have a very inadequate opinion of progress and its power of sweeping obstacles from its path. Right reason alone can hold a wide and permanent sway over human intelligence; real goodness alone can command the love and enthusiasm of multitudes; and even then they require the influx of divine grace to make their power universal. If the Catholic Church has exerted such an influence as this for eighteen hundred years and exerts it still, there is but one adequate explanation, viz., that she is supported by God, and derives from Him both her indefectible life and her

universal fitness to rule the human race in every stage of its development.

The enemies of the Church, even while condemning her, wonder at her unexampled adaptability to all circumstances. And indeed there is no such marvelous spectacle on earth. Age differs from age, country from country, all things vary according to time and place. The conditions that helped development in one period are unendurable fetters in the next. Only one institution goes on for ever, itself unchanged, yet adapting itself to every aspect of humanity. In every stage and society, under every form of government, from the center to the extremities of the world, there is one great figure that seems to preside over the destinies of men. It is a unique fact in history that the Church of the Catacombs should be the Church of the Middle Ages and the Church of the nineteenth century; that it should adapt itself equally to the persecutions of the Roman empire and to princely domination in later times; that it should flourish alike in the monarchies of the old world and the democratic republics of the new; that it should be equally naturalized in the capitals of Europe and the deserts of Africa, and the great prairies of the West; that it should mould to one faith and one worship the Asiatic and the American, the German and the Italian, the professors in universities and the islanders in the Southern seas. That Church exists now and has the same predominance, not merely with her own children, but with the world at large of this day, as she had in the Ages of Faith. She is no fossil of bygone days, no interesting relic that has lost its utility and fills a shelf in a museum, but she has all the vigor and more than the influence that she has ever before possessed. The existence of the Church at the present day is an incontrovertible proof of her universal fitness. Her fitness for all times and places is an incontrovertible proof of her divine origin and authority. Scripture, and reason, and history, and present facts, combine to prove that the Catholic Church is the Church of Progress and the Church of the Living God.

XLIX. THE CHURCH AND MODERN PROGRESS.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JAMES BELLORD, D.D.

"The judgment of death is for this man; because he hath prophecied against this city, as you have heard with your ears."—Jerem. xxvi, 11.

SYNOPSIS.—I. An old yet ever-present objection against the Church is that she is the enemy of progress. This objection insisted on by all the enemies of the Church. Even her enemies give evidence in her favor, on particular points. If the objection were true, she could not have done so much good work, in fact would have ceased to exist.

II. The institution and the history of the Church clearly prove that she is not and can not be the enemy of progress. 1. Her mission, even though spiritual, tends to the advancement of mankind. 2. Her relations to society, even in the temporal order, have the same tendency, though indirectly.

III. The Church always concerned with the progress of man in every order, moral, intellectual, social. Concerned first of all with the spiritual advancement of men. She has ever taught that temporal progress is to be esteemed in proportion to its relation to man's final destiny; that the supernatural is to be sought in preference to the natural. In this she follows Christ's example. So she denounces the evils of the day, even though in doing so she may be charged with standing in the way of progress.

I. If we are to believe the opinion that is current in a large section of the world, the Catholic Church has one great note or mark that always distinguishes her, she is the enemy of human progress. This is the first article of faith in a great many religious bodies; it is about the only article of faith on which the innumerable sects are jointly agreed; they have no other unity except that which gives them their name, the unity of protesting against the one true Church of God. As it is their unity so it is their strength. This view is so constant that it is considered to need no proof besides the fact that so many agree in holding it. It is a first principle. In a thousand forms it comes up every day. The Catholic Church, it is said, is always unprogressive and behind the age, it is committed to ignorance, it is the enemy of light and investigation, it enslaves the mind, and is the great obstacle to liberty; it is responsible for paganism, which was its enemy of the first three centuries; for barbarism, which it gradually overthrew; for the corruptions and civil tumults with which it had to contend while bringing society into a settled state; for the infidelity which is its present

foe. All the evils with which it contended, all the violations of its own laws by disobedient subjects, all that is evil in every national character or in the prevailing worldly spirit of each successive age, all the troubles that flowed from the neglect of its precepts, are set down as being the direct result of the Church's action. Such is the tradition of falsehood that has grown up in the world.

Whenever an investigator has the honesty to seek the bare truth and the courage to set it forth, he has come to the conclusion, in spite of his original prejudice, that the charges against the Church are untrue in that particular period which he has examined. It would be possible to gather from witnesses generally hostile to the Church a series of vindications of her character covering every period from the days of St. Peter to the days of Pius X. Some writers find Catholic doctrines reasonable and consistent throughout, and expose the influence for good which they have had on each generation. Others explain at length how the Catholic Church undermined paganism and created the early civilization of Europe. Others have dwelt on the influence of the Popes in shielding the people from the oppression of kings and nobles, and establishing popular liberties. Others have taken up the monastic system, so calumniated by those who know nothing about it, and have shown what its services were to literature and learning, agriculture and wealth, art and refinement of manners. Others have revealed the true character of the "glorious reformation," with the misery, the immorality, the cruel wars that resulted from it. Some have devoted themselves to the glorification of certain saints who have been the special representatives of the Catholic spirit. Scores have borne witness to the unapproachable heroism of Catholic missionaries and religious orders, and to the success which they and they alone command. But these after all are the few; they speak only to one or another of the many points which calumny has distorted; their evidence is slow in becoming widely known. A certain number may thus be brought to admit that, at some remote times, or in a few corners of the world, the Catholic Church has done a noble work; but they admit it only as an exception to the general rule; and they too join in the prevalent chorus against the Catholic Church as being hostile to mankind at least in her general tendency.

The enemies of the Church prove too much, and therefore they prove nothing. If their allegations were all true, the Catholic Church, as being the enemy of all human welfare, the obstacle to all

progress, the mother of ignorance, superstition and tyranny, would be simply the Evil Principle, the enemy of God as well as of man, and utterly incapable of any of those good and Christian works which everybody must admit she has wrought. If those charges were true they would prove indeed that the Catholic Church was not the one founded by the Apostles, and not the inheritor of the promises of Jesus Christ; but if they were true, the Catholic Church could not possibly have preserved her existence up to the present day. For, supposing the Church to be an ordinary human institution, she would long ago have been swept into nothingness by the overwhelming torrent of human progress. Supposing her to have been originally divine and to have been corrupted and to have failed like the Jewish church of old, then God would not have continued to her that indefectible life and energy which make her the sole exception to the universal law of decay and death. The flourishing existence of the Church shows that she meets a want in human nature; and while that is the case, it is not merely a falsehood, it is a folly to talk of her as essentially opposed to the worthy aspirations of mankind.

Yet it is not to be wondered at that such gross untruths should be put forward and should meet acceptance. The Church must ever be the butt of human passion, she is persecuted with a blind fury by all who differ from her, she has to suffer both open calumny and the more insidious misrepresentation of facts that are actual. Her enemies think that any weapon is good enough to use against her, and in their selection of arguments they do not consider what is true, but what is most damaging. The charge of being hostile to progress, to liberty, to enlightenment, is a very telling one. It makes the Church contemptible as well as hateful, it arrays against her one of the strongest impulses of humanity, and also one of the strongest of illegitimate impulses, that of pride. The Church is represented as keeping mature humanity in the leading strings of infancy, denying it all independence, ignoring its dignity, and at the same time men are flattered by the assurance that they are sufficient by themselves for all purposes, that they need no guidance, and own no allegiance to any law but that of their own interest. Hence the great jealousy of any authority that presumes to dictate to them. There is also a general suspicion of what is old, as if it must be inferior to what is modern, as if nothing will suit our superior cultivation but what we have devised for ourselves; and it

is found impossible to realize that the Church like Him who is her life is ever new while ever ancient; and that while all things else grow antiquated she ever renews her youth. Then also there is much ambiguity about the term "Modern Progress." Progress itself has many departments, and it is not every kind of progress that is beneficial. There are many modern and prevalent ideas which are neither progressive nor beneficial, and there is a great deal of progress which is by no means modern. Hence there is much misunderstanding of the attitude of the Church, and much opportunity, consequently, of misrepresenting it.

II. Let us consider what has been the attitude of the Church toward the progress of mankind. The new doctrines that Our Lord made known to the world contained all the germs of future progress. Christian principles first made their way among men, formed a new character in them and then became the basis of all the institutions which their social life required. It was not the direct object of religion to draw up constitutions, to carry on government, to dictate codes of law, to regulate the internal affairs of states or their relations to one another. Its object was to re-create human nature according to the model of God in Jesus Christ, to start a new set of ideas and higher principles of conduct. The germs of the new order of things were chiefly a more complete knowledge of God and the future life, closer union with God by love and by the Holy Eucharist, the example of Our Lord's virtues, the brotherhood and equality of all men, liberty, charity or universal love, and strict justice. On this foundation a new society was to be formed; the application of these principles and all minor details were left to be worked out by such as were fitted for the task, and in various ways, according to the circumstances of each community. The principles themselves were final and eternal, the forms in which they were embodied were subject to variation. The Church, the teacher of religion, was the repository of these ideas; it was her duty to maintain them in their purity and keep them constantly before mankind. Her office then was eternal, and she was to be the ultimate source of all progress, in all times, and all places. Yet the Church was not to be the sole administrative power; she was not to be ruler and legislator, secular teacher and sanitary engineer, as in the early times of Israel. Religion was her department, she was supreme in matters of faith and morals, and the civil power was supreme in other departments. She was the interpreter of religious ideas, and these were to be the

life of all secular action in society outside. This is the key to the position of the Catholic Church in regard to progress; this is her proper function in society.

The conditions of society, however, did not permit the Church to confine herself to her special duties; she was compelled at times to take on her certain other duties which belonged to the State, but which the State had not the means of fulfilling. In the barbarous days which intervened between the old and the new civilization, almost the only educated men in Europe were the ecclesiastics; they alone valued the arts of peace, and understood all methods of government and discipline except those of camps. They did not forget that they were citizens as well as Churchmen, and, as a consequence of their higher education, the chief civic duties devolved on them. Bishops were, of necessity, often temporal princes, and generally they were the chief councillors of their sovereigns. The clergy, being in touch with every class, were the intermediaries between kings and people; they taught subjects to obey for conscience' sake, they laid down the duties of rulers and insisted on their performance. They were always on the side of freedom against arbitrary power, they founded the popular liberties in every country, they declared when kings had forfeited by their misdeeds their claim to allegiance. It must be remembered also that the first declaration of liberty and the rights of man emanated from the Church when she set her face against slavery and finally abolished it in Europe. In another way, progress was advanced by the great works of public utility undertaken by the bishops or monasteries. In our days they are carried out by companies of capitalists, who take them up either as investments for their own savings, or as the means of appropriating for themselves the savings of others. Wherever the Church held power formerly we find aqueducts and roads and bridges, hospitals and schools, rivers embanked, marshes drained, harbors built; and all this at no expense to the community, and with no burden of debt for posterity. We pride ourselves on our universal education as one of the chief signs of our progress. For ages, when our barbarous ancestors despised and impeded education as useless and unmanly, the Church alone held up the torch of knowledge; she preserved ancient literature and commenced the new; she founded colleges and universities everywhere; she kept science and art alive, and persevered till she made knowledge a power in the world. In the monastery schools education was really free; the father not

only was exempt from payment for the instruction of his own children, but he was exempt from being taxed to provide free education for the children of others.

The Church had also a great influence on account of her landed possessions, and this influence was used for the benefit and the progress of men. She protected the poor and oppressed, she restrained the tyranny of kings and barons, she discouraged war and mitigated its ferocity and destructiveness when she could not prevent it, cultivated the arts of peace, settled the newly converted barbarians and formed them into industrial communities; she organized labor, so as to improve its efficiency and secure it due remuneration. What is all this but advancement and progress? Yet again the Church implanted certain mental and moral habits which are more important for human development than even her great material contributions toward it. These habits were the idea of justice, the idea of brotherly love, the idea of honor, the idea of respect for authority. These ideas, founded on religion, are dying out now with the decay of religion, so that they are hardly recognized among men; and in consequence the benefits of civilization are being diminished and its forces turned to evil account.

These are but a few examples of what the Catholic Church has done for the advancement of the world. There are many other instances in which the Church has taken upon herself burdens which did not properly belong to her province. Her clergy undertook them in their capacity of citizens rather than as ecclesiastics, and in default of others who had capacity for them. As time goes on the various classes of citizens become capable of undertaking their own duties, and the Church retires, or more often is dispossessed with contumely as having usurped those duties. She confines herself more exclusively to her own spiritual duties, she ceases to be what she temporarily was, the leader of all kinds of progress. She is accused then of lagging behind, of having changed her character and become useless. It is only that the demands upon her have changed. She still is ready when occasion offers to undertake again the teaching of civilization as well as of religion; and every day she shows that she has not lost those abilities which formerly she exercised.

III. The Church has always been concerned, and now as much as formerly, with the real progress of men, *i. e.*, their moral and intellectual advancement, their social order, their happiness, and the

averting of the evils of war, disease and the like, even although these lie outside the sphere of strictly spiritual progress. But there is another department of worldly progress, it is that which is simply material, or rather it consists of the instruments of progress, wealth, comfort, inventions, machinery, commerce, rapid transport, great buildings, sanitary improvements and such like. Although the Church has taken her full share in the development of these, still they lie further outside her principal object, and, in later times especially, she has devoted less attention to them. At the same time men are getting to value these things more and more, and to set them, not only above spiritual interests, but above the higher worldly interests of mankind. Material progress has come to be considered as the real substance of progress and an end in itself, instead of the means and instrument of progress. The Church has not shared in this exorbitant appreciation of material achievements. She has pointed out that their advantages are not unmixed; that, according to the way they are used, they may be injurious as well as beneficial; that they may be prejudicial to the highest progress of man, and that their use must be controlled and subordinated to the spiritual laws of justice and charity. She has fought, not against such things in themselves, but against excess in the appreciation of them or the use of them. While admitting the excellence of these natural virtues which conduce to temporal prosperity, such as industry, thrift, independence of mind, enterprise, cleanliness, she insists that humility, chastity, devotion, self-restraint are on a much higher level. She exalts the supernatural above the merely natural, places eternity before time, the soul before the body. The burden of her teaching is: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his justice, and all these things shall be added to you" (Matt. vi, 33). So Our Lord Jesus Christ commanded, and so He asked. Having all knowledge and all power, He did not discover to men the secrets of electricity hidden for ages in the recesses of nature, He did not organize commerce, and banking, and the system of credit; He did not open up undiscovered continents; when He was invited to divide the inheritance between two brothers, He refused and merely bade them beware of covetousness. The Catholic Church has followed this example, and this is one chief foundation of the charge against her that she is the enemy of progress. Events are justifying the provisions of the Church. Material progress is benefiting many, but on the whole it has not conduced to the progress of the multitudes. The increase

of wealth has flowed into the pockets of the few; with the increase of production the struggle for a sufficiency has become more intense; natural blessings have been turned into means of terrible oppression. It is coming to be recognized that the chief factor of even worldly progress and happiness is spiritual rather than material, within the soul of man rather than in external nature; and that what we require to remedy misery and discontent is, not the discovery of a new continent, the opening of rich gold fields, or machinery that will double production and halve the cost of it, but rather the revival of the Christian virtues of justice, sobriety, moderation, and benevolence. In due course it will be recognized that the Christian spirit, and not the modern commercial spirit of greed, is the real source of human progress.

In one limited sense the Church is the enemy of progress, *i. e.*, of a certain progress that is destructive of all real advance. It is only to be called progress in a logical sense, viz., because it is the carrying out of false promises to worse conclusions. There is a certain kind of advance in the sense of continuing on the same lines; but it is the advance of one who is rushing blindly down a decline toward a precipice. This is the nature of what are called modern ideas as opposed to Christian ideas. There is a regular development of them, they are decidedly modern, and they are destructive of social order, morality, peace, and happiness. The idea has come into vogue that man is the master of his destiny, that he knows best what suits his nature, that he needs no guidance; consequently that revealed truth and the divine law are outside practical life, that they are unrealities, mere fancies and superstitions which should have no influence on human life. This idea is considered as the latest outcome of modern science and thought, and an attempt is being made to carry on the civilized world in harmony with it. In legislation and politics there is no recognition of any responsibility to God, and no regard for any law but current public opinion. Hence there have been a multitude of laws passed, a number of customs introduced in public and private life, in commerce and in the economy of states, which are directly opposed to the law of God, are mortally sinful, and sure to incur punishment in the shape of social evils and the hindrance of the real progress of men. The godless or unchristian spirit of the times expresses itself in laws of divorce, in confiscation of private property when it is used for religious purposes, in education without religion, in the glorification of

indecency and in hostility to all forms of holy life, in the general spread of dishonesty in money matters great and small, in the disregard of truth, justice and benevolence in the dealings of country with country, and in the toleration or tenderness that is felt toward many crimes, such as impurity, and suicide, and at times murder. When the Church raises her voice against these or any other embodiments of the godless spirit, she is represented as attacking the foundations of social order. She denounces certain ideas and methods that prevail in certain civilized communities, and she is therefore held up to hatred as the deadly foe of civilization and progress: "The judgment of death is for this man; because he hath prophecied against this city as you have heard with your ears" (Jer. xxvi, 11).

By all these calumnies against the Church of God a wide prejudice is created, she is prevented from doing her full work in the world, and consequently the work of progress is seriously retarded. For centuries the Church guided the advance of the world successfully, although under many difficulties; she is doing the same now, but her power is much limited. If she had been allowed liberty to carry out her divine vocation the world would have made much greater progress than it actually has. All the good we now have we would still have, and without those drawbacks that now neutralize so much of the good. The world must certainly have suffered much from rejecting those aids to progress which God has offered in the Catholic Church. "Who hath resisted him and hath had peace?" (Job ix, 4). And we can not expect that the world's possibilities of progress will ever be realized until mankind comes to recognize the Church as the sole fount of those ideas on which progress and human well-being depends. In the Old Testament God reproached the Israelites for abandoning His guidance and for seeking to make progress by methods of their own, methods which seemed better than the divine ones but which led to destruction. The same reproach might be addressed to this generation: "Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the Lord thy God that teach thee profitable things, that govern thee in the way that thou walkest. O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments; thy peace had been as a river, and thy justice as the waves of the sea. And thy seed had been as the sand, and the offspring of the bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not have perished, nor have been destroyed from before my face" (Isa. xlviii, 17-19).

L. HUMAN RESPECT AND PERSECUTION.

BY THE REV. H. G. HUGHES.

"Fear ye not them that kill the body, and are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him that can destroy both body and soul in hell."—Matt. x, 28.

SYNOPSIS.—I. Persecution the lot of all true Christians. We may have thought that these words (of the text) apply to martyrdom only. They do apply to martyrdom, but also to all kinds of persecution. The martyrs—their choice. All have to make a similar choice. Many Catholics have to suffer real persecution. This is an honor. Another kind of persecution—that carried on by the worldly minded against the spiritually minded. This all good Christians have to bear—public opinion. We have to choose between this and Jesus Christ. "No man can serve two masters." We try to do so.

II. What is human respect? A definition. Its characteristics: (a) Loss of moral liberty.. (b) Sign of a weak judgment. (c) It is a slavery by which we risk our salvation—instances of this. (d) It is a great offence against God. Thus we have the same objects of choice as the martyrs. Exhortation to "have done" with it. Its evil effect even on good people.

III. How to avoid the dangers of human respect. (a) Take up a strong position from the first. Special circumstances under which this must be put in practice. (b) A practical spirit of faith, i. e., thoughtful conviction of the truths of religion influencing the will. (c) Watchfulness—by self-examination. (d) Regular and devout use of the means of grace.

We have often, dear brethren in Jesus Christ, heard or read these words of our divine Lord that I have taken for my text; and it may be that we have thought them to have little or no application to our own lives. We are not likely to be called upon to make the choice between temporal death at the hands of the enemies of our faith and the risk of everlasting destruction at the hands of God in punishment of apostacy. Many thousands in past times, and many even in our own times, have had this choice put before them—to renounce their faith and fall under the anger of the God whom they would thus betray; or to endure torments, shame, temporal ruin or disgrace, and even death itself, at the hands of their persecutors. Some, indeed, have chosen wrongly, and have preferred a few short years of earthly life, or of earthly prosperity, to the eternal crown of martyrdom, unable to face the sharp, but short, suffering

by which that crown was to be obtained. But others, thousands of them, of all ages and conditions, young boys and tender maidens, youths in the first flush of manhood, the aged and infirm also, as well as the strong and vigorous in the prime of life, have chosen aright, and willingly, patiently, nay, joyfully and triumphantly laid down life and all that the world holds dear for the love and honor of Jesus Christ their well loved Lord and Saviour.

And it was, doubtless, to those who should have this choice put before them that our blessed Lord's words were primarily directed; but not to those alone. His words have an application to all true Christians. If the choice put before every Christian be not the choice between martyrdom and apostacy, yet it is similar. No one who is striving to be a good Christian and to serve God will escape some kind of persecution. It may easily happen, indeed, and it frequently does happen, that a Catholic has to endure very real, very bitter and severe persecution for his faithfulness to his conscience, to Jesus Christ, and the one true Church which Jesus Christ founded upon earth. Let such thank God for it; let them rejoice that they are called upon to imitate the glorious martyrs, the heroes of our holy faith. Let them remember, also, to their consolation, that although they are not privileged to give their lives for Christ, nor to endure the extremities of physical torture, of prison, of banishment which the martyrs so nobly endured, yet after the prolonged, and even life-long persecution to which they are subjected, the coldness of friends, the loss of means and position, the scornful sneers of acquaintances, the anger and harshness of relatives, or again the political and social disabilities under which they must live—all these, and numerous other sufferings which the hatred of the world for the true religion of Jesus Christ frequently inflicts upon His followers, do truly assimilate them to the noble army of martyrs.

They have not to endure the keen and agonizing torture of fire or knife or rack; but they have to endure a long and wearing trial; and even if no considerable loss or suffering falls to their lot, there may be a constant succession of small and worrying acts of petty persecution which constitute, from their frequency, a real hardship. These sufferings, practically borne for Jesus Christ, will assuredly gain for them a great reward in the heavenly kingdom. These times are supposed to be liberal, tolerant, indifferent as to a man's opinions; but even now may be found numerous instances

of persecution. Our children are often persecuted in the schools, our young working men and girls in factories and workshops. Catholics are kept out of positions for which their abilities make them as fit as anyone else. Let them not murmur nor repine. Let them, indeed, use all lawful means to procure just treatment, but in the meantime let them rejoice that they are counted worthy to suffer something for His Name's sake.

I have given instances, so far, of wilful or premeditated persecution only, inflicted by those who knowingly or ignorantly are actuated by hostilities to God's holy Church. But there is, as I have already said, another kind of persecution which no one will escape. And the persecutors are to be found not only among those who do not belong to the Catholic Church, but also, alas! within the fold. It is the persecution inflicted by those who live according to the flesh upon those who live according to the spirit; by the worldly, the careless and the indifferent upon those who are striving to be faithful to the teachings of Jesus. Together with the active premeditated persecution which breaks out from time to time, it is one form in which the antagonism of the world and the world-spirit against Christ's truth and holiness is manifested. And it differs from other forms of persecution in this, that it is constant, and escaped by none who sincerely try to follow in the footsteps of our blessed Lord. This is the kind of persecution spoken of by the Holy Ghost through the mouth of St. Paul: "All that will live godly in Christ shall suffer persecution" (II Tim. iii, 12). As long as we are in the world, the world's low ideals of duty, low motives of conduct, specious offers of temporal advantage, of gain, or fame, or ease and comfort are at hand to tempt us, and, more than that, are urged upon us, dinned into our ears by an insistent never-silent voice—the voice of an all too numerous portion of the society in which we live. It came into my mind to say "the voice of public opinion," but I would fain cling to the idea—I hope I need not call it the delusion—that public opinion, if truly roused to attention, and rightly informed, would be on the side of truth and justice and duty. But, in truth, there are two sorts of public opinion, a more worthy and a less worthy, and it is the less worthy public, the public of low ideals or of no ideals, which is a true persecutor of those that strive "to live godly in Christ." This unworthy public opinion, and the example of those who live by its maxims, are ever at hand to draw us away from the path of Christian duty, and it finds, alas,

too ready and too powerful an ally in the evil inclinations of our own fallen nature.

This, then, is the choice which is put before us all: to choose between the world's ways of thinking and judging, between the world's rules and maxims of life and conduct on the one hand, and the mind of Jesus Christ, the love and maxims of His Gospel on the other. In regard to these things there ever has been, and there ever will be, war between the world and Christ, between the worldly minded and the spiritually minded.

And this is why, my dear brethren, worldliness is so dangerous a thing for a Christian; a thing to be watched for in ourselves, and guarded against, and rooted out without mercy if so be that it has come into our hearts. "No servant," our divine Lord has said, "can serve two masters. . . . You can not serve God and mammon" (Luke xvi, 13). You can not be imbued with the world's ways of judging conduct and Christ's ways of judging conduct. You can not be a true Christian and a follower of this world at the same time.

But alas, we often try to occupy this impossible position; and we are led to do so by what is called, in the language of spiritual writers, *human respect.* What is human respect? It is "the inordinate desire of pleasing men, or a fear of displeasing them, whereby we are led either to omit the good we ought to do, or to do the evil which we ought to avoid." In other words, human respect is that frame of mind which leads us to neglect our duty as Christians and Catholics for the sake of what others will say or think or do.

How terribly prevalent this is! How many sins, how much neglect of Mass, of Sacraments, of the precepts of the Church, such as that of fasting and abstinence; how many marriages unblessed by the Church, how many apostacies, indeed, can be justly put down to human respect? It is a thing which we do not think much of, perhaps, and about which we have not thought to examine our conscience. But if we consider the matter, we shall be surprised, upon a little reflection, to find not only how much evil human respect causes in the world, but also how much more it has influenced our own conduct than ever we had supposed.

It will profit us to look this evil in the face. We shall see that it is one of the most effective weapons wielded by the devil for the destruction of souls. Human respect is in every way bad. To begin

with, by acting from human respect we give up our moral independence and liberty; we sacrifice the "liberty of the children of God," the precious "freedom with which Christ hath made us free." We know very well that the principles to which, from motives of human respect, we bow down are such as we are bound by virtue of our Christian profession to despise and renounce, that the persons to whom we defer would, in fact, respect us far more if we stood firm and acted according to our convictions.

Secondly, to give way to human respect shows great weakness of judgment on the part of those who do it. We know by experience that it is impossible to please everyone. Why should we try to please the less virtuous, the less sensible and the more frivolous portion of the community? We have not succeeded in the past in securing ourselves from ill will and adverse criticism by our endeavors to please the world. Would it not be far wiser to give up the attempt, and devote our energies to pleasing God our Maker and Redeemer? Further, those who are slaves—for it is a slavery—to human respect, run the greatest risk of losing their souls. How many poor sinners there are who are held in the bonds and chains of their sins because they do not dare to face the jeers and scoffs, or even merely the ill-natured remarks which their so-called friends would direct at them if they had the courage to follow the dictates of conscience. Take the sin of intemperance: many a man, aye, multitudes of men, have been led into drunkenness and kept in it because they had not the courage to say "No" to those who asked them to drink. How many, too, have been led into mortal sin and made the slaves of vice because they were too cowardly to set themselves against the practices of those about them. They took up with a loose life because they could not bear a few sneers, which would have quickly ceased had they but ignored them; and they stifled the voice of God within them, calling them to repentance, from dread of the ridicule of their associates in sin. Some there are who become convinced of the truth of the Holy Catholic religion, and yet dare not embrace it for fear of what people will say; many more there are, in all probability, who desist from inquiry into the claims of the Church because they begin to feel themselves influenced by the reasons brought forward. They dare not run the risk of becoming convinced; human respect holds them back, and they reject the grace offered to them.

Lastly, my dear brethren, but by no means least, we must re-

member that to give way to human respect is truly a great offence against the majesty of God. After all, what does it amount to? Nothing less than a choice between God and creatures; between the all-holy will of God and the will—nay, sometimes even the mere whims and fancies of man. To give way to human respect, to sin in order to please the world, is a complete overturning of the order which God has established by creation. We were made for God, and for Him alone; to know Him, to love Him, to serve Him. All things else, all other creatures, and our fellowmen not the least, were created for us, to be used by us in no other way than as aids to the great end for which each individual soul has been called out of nothingness into being by the Almighty Creator of all. This is the true view of things, my dear brethren. If we took that view consistently; if we held ever in remembrance this great foundation truth of religion—that we are here to serve God, and by serving Him to save our souls, we should not be so ready to cast aside His holy law and commandments because one who is equally with ourselves a creature of the Almighty Hand solicits us to do so. Yet men will sin, and do sin, because one will say this, another will think that, a third may do something disagreeable, so and so will be offended. It is the miserable choice of the Jews over again: "Not this man, but Barabbas. Give us Barabbas and let this one be crucified." Not God's holy will, but the desires of some unworthy creature; not God's law, but the law of the world. When we are tempted to act from human respect we should do well to recall the warning of our blessed Lord, that if we deny Him before men, He will deny us before His Heavenly Father.

We have, then, dear brethren, practically the same choice to make as the glorious martyrs whom we honor. The conditions of the choice are different. but the objects between which we have to choose are the same. On the one hand there is God, our Maker, our Redeemer, our Lord, who holds out to us as the reward of faithfulness a happiness beyond our present conception; on the other hand the wicked or the unworthy who offer to us, as the price of our submission to their standards of morality, the wholly uncertain and insecure reward of their worthless approval. Like the martyrs, then, we have to make choice between God and man; and "we ought to obey God rather than man." In the same spirit as they, the spirit of strong faith and of personal love for our blessed Lord, let us boldly take His side. Surely He deserves that we should

be ready to lay down our very lives for Him; yet often we are willing to betray His interests in the hope of standing well with our fellow creatures. Far from being ready to suffer any great thing, we can not even bear a taunt for the honor of His name.

"Fear not them who can only kill the body," says our blessed Lord; and we fear a harsh word, an unkind remark, an unfavorable opinion, "what the world will say," while with the most foolish presumption we put out of mind the terrible punishments with which the justice of God must avenge the insult we offer Him by preferring creatures before Him. Have done, my dear brethren, with this miserable and unworthy disposition of mind. It is highly dangerous to the soul of a Christian. Even if it does not lead to mortal sin—and, alas, too often it does—but if not, how many venial sins are committed in consequence of it; and what havoc it plays with the spiritual life. How many souls there are who, but for this, would advance swiftly in the path of true Christian perfection. They do not allow human respect to lead them into actual sin, perhaps; though it is hard to see how they can escape some venial sin on account of it; but one thing is certain, that they are hampered and hindered; they are not generous with God, they can not bring themselves to make certain sacrifices which conscience tells them would be very pleasing to God, and would remove obstacles from their path toward a higher perfection; they make certain reserves in their service of God, and in certain matters they defer to the views of the worldly. Oh, all you who sincerely wish to love God well and to do Him service for the glory of His name, cut out this demon of human respect if you find it to have gained even a slight foothold. Determine to do what you know to be the right thing, considering only what is pleasing to God and beneficial to your own souls.

In conclusion let us ask how we can avoid this serious fault of human respect.

In the first place we must, from the very beginning, take up the right position; and with a calm firmness let it be seen by all that we are not to be moved from it by any worldly and unworthy considerations whatever. We should take this resolution especially when the circumstances of life lead us to take up our abode among strangers. They will watch us; and the first few weeks will show them, and probably decide for us, whether we are going to be on the side of God or of the world. When you, my younger hearers,

go forth into life, then, I entreat of you, guard against human respect. Remember the holy lessons of your youth; take your stand boldly from the first among the followers of Jesus Christ. How many a young man's life has been wrecked because he was not firm at starting. A change of scene, even if only temporary, is often a source of danger. New temptations will be at hand in a new place. New acquaintances will be there to lead a man astray. This, too, is an occasion for a determined resolution, from the very first, not to give way to human respect. When, again, the voice of conscience has made itself heard, after a retreat, for instance, or a mission, or some warning from God, and we feel that we must change our lives, human respect will not fail to drag us back if we will allow it to do so. What will people say, if they see me giving up this or that pleasure; if they observe me frequenting the Sacraments oftener; if my attitude in church becomes more devout, and I am seen to pray? Care not, dear brother, what they say. In a week or two they will cease to say anything, and if you persist, they will respect you in their heart of hearts. To avoid the dangers, then, of human respect, take a firm stand at the beginning.

Secondly, we must be imbued with the spirit of faith—practical faith; the faith of one who is convinced of the great truths of our holy religion; who has, by serious thought, made them sink deep into his heart, and whose will is influenced and strengthened by the thought of God and eternity, the value of his soul, the great reward and the terrible punishment.

Thirdly, we must watch for this enemy. It may easily find an entrance unperceived. We must check it in regard to small things, or it will soon influence us in greater. Hence there is an urgent need of careful self-examination on this matter.

Lastly, we must regularly and devoutly make use of all the means of grace, in which we shall find strength. In the strength of these same means, the glorious martyrs went with all courage to a bitter and painful death; and in their strength we shall overcome all forms of persecution and temptation, and, God helping us, shall make the martyr's choice, and hold ourselves ready on all occasions to confess Him before men, who one day shall confess us before the face of our Father in Heaven.

LI. CHRISTIANITY THE SOURCE OF CIVILIZATION.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JAMES BELLORD, D.D.

"Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Unless the Lord keep the city, he watcheth in vain that keepeth it."—Psal. cxxvi, 1.

SYNOPSIS.—I. The incident of the Tower of Babel recorded in the Bible shows clearly man's insufficiency of himself and his need of God in all his undertakings. The same can be said of the social life which is a gift of God.

II. History just as clearly tells us of the dependence of civilization upon religion.

III. The history of the Jewish nation as told in the Old Testament is a strong confirmation of the same fact.

IV. The history of the Christian Church, showing what she has done for civilization, proclaims the same truth.

V. Powerful, unscrupulous men of to-day, forgetful of the lessons of history, are conspiring to ruin the Church, to drive out Christ and His religion. They shall fail; for Christianity is to endure forever, and in due time she shall recivilize the world, and bring it back to God.

I. We read in Genesis of a great act of defiance against God, when "the nations conspired together to consent to wickedness" (Wisd. x, 5) shortly after the deluge, and set about building a great tower that was to reach to heaven. Men had grown numerous and were about to be separated, and they wished in their pride to "make their name famous forever." Their tower was to be a testimony to their unity of origin and a bond of union between their descendants. It was to be a protection, too, against the wrath of God in case He should forget His promise and attempt to destroy the world again by a deluge. There was grandeur in the idea of so great a monument, in spite of its perversity and absurdity; it showed energy, courage, perseverance, industry, and that desire of immortal remembrance which has prompted so many of the greatest deeds. But, like many other deeds of power, daring, and even of genius, it was grievously wicked. It was undertaken without God's aid or blessing, by men relying entirely on their own sufficiency. It was against His will and for their own glorification. It showed mistrust and disbelief in God's word, and it set their ingenuity and strength against the divine power of wisdom. But God in a mo-

ment brought their design to naught by a means that they had not anticipated, and separated them, tribe from tribe, by the change of their speech. Union, intercourse, society, became impossible between the tribes, and they scattered themselves, as God had designed, over the earth. They proved the truth, "Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it."

There is a social edifice into which men are built up, forming one community, with character and habits and thoughts alike, and having a common united action as of one person. It has a life of its own, different from the life of its individual members, with a regularity of growth and advancement and a continuity through successive generations. It is a wonderful thing, this unity of so many individuals, each occupied with his own affairs, knowing nothing about large numbers of his race, nor of those who went before, nor of those who are to follow him, yet all having one corporate life among them and one character which will be transmitted for fifty generations, substantially the same, but developing like the character of a growing man. This is social life. This constitutes nations and families of nations; this constitutes, in its progress through the centuries, a civilization. This life is the direct gift of God. In its origin, its maintenance, its progress, it depends immediately on the recognition of God and His laws. If this edifice be built up on any other foundation, or if, when built, God is banished from it, then it is doomed to the fate of the Tower of Confusion.

II. History tells us of many civilizations which grew, ran their course and perished. The best known were the Roman and the Greek. Earlier still was the Egyptian, lost in the gloom of centuries, beyond the reach almost of history, but revealed to us now in ruins and inscriptions that date back before the time of Moses. There was an advanced civilization of unknown antiquity among the Babylonians, the Indians, and the Chinese. Vestiges have been discovered of vast civilizations in the new continents. But however various and widely separated they be, all alike grew up around and entwined with some form of religion. Those religions, indeed, were false, i. e., they had become corrupted from the original form in which they had been transmitted to the earliest men; but they had come from a stock of truth, the primitive revelation of God to men; and amid deficiencies and errors, they preserved the fundamental religious truths: of a God, a moral law, a future life, a great sin, and a coming Redeemer. Virtues were

known and reverenced, even if not always practised—obedience, patriotism, respect for authority, reverence for traditional truths, and above all chastity. Every religion had its forms of solemn worship—prayer and sacrifice; though in many cases these sank into horrible debasement and cruelty. In every case religion was part and parcel of social life. It was recognized that the supernatural, i. e., belief in God, in divine laws, and future reward, was the only foundation for that self-suppression which made peace, justice and government possible. Some races have never developed into an organized community, or discovered the arts, or commenced a civilization; but these are just the races which seem most devoid of real religious ideas or worship. Hence it would appear that the first motive power which elevates man above the level of the ant or the beaver is the recognition of a God and of duties to Him. This creates higher aspirations, enlightens the mind, and is the starting point of all progress.

III. The Old Testament records not only the religious history of the Jewish nation, but their political history, and the origin, growth and decay of their social system. The dealings of God with this one people teach us the general laws of this providence toward all other nations. The chief reason is that Jewish civilization took its origin in religion and failed with it. When the people forgot the laws of God and renounced their spiritual duties, then social and political misfortunes came upon them. Their safety, their greatness, their prosperity, their national life, depended entirely on their fidelity to God. The great king, prophet and psalmist spoke literal truth and no figure—spoke with ample knowledge from past experience and from insight into the future, when he said, "Unless the Lord keep the city, he watches in vain that keeps it." All the great calamities of the Jews, their fatal wars, foreign oppression, the Babylonian captivity, the loss of the ten tribes, the final rejection and dispersion, came upon them in consequence of their persistent refusal to allow God His due place in their civilization. Their views were secular; they wished to be as the nations round them, and to make their life as a nation natural instead of supernatural; they wished to rely on the arm of flesh and not on God, to live their life as their own masters and not as His instruments, to follow up their material and political interests, and not to subserve the spiritual purposes which God had in electing them. When at last the time came for them to fulfil their destiny, they

were found unfit and unworthy of it, and others were called to their high duties and their glory. It was due to their irreligion that the transition from the Old to the New Testament was not the gradual transformation of the previous into a more perfect system, but took the form of a violent catastrophe, and the destruction and rejection of all belonging to the former dispensation.

The same principle which made the Jews revolt against God in the earlier times made them turn from Jesus Christ. They wanted a powerful, conquering Messias, who would break the nations in pieces, and rule them with a rod of iron, and raise Israel to a dominant position among the proud and wealthy nations of the world. His birth in the stable, His life of lowliness, His death by public execution, were a scandal and a stumbling-block to them. They would not have as their King one who declared that His kingdom was not of this world, and rejecting what they thought was only spiritual, they lost at the same time their succession to a world-wide power and dominion in the new social order and its civilization. For the Cross of Our Lord's shame has been the greatest force in modeling even the secular history of the world. It is the sign of redemption and spiritual life, but it has another function also; it is the standard of civilization; it is the source from which has risen all that is good in the modern world. Religion can not confine itself to what is called its own sphere. Its proper and immediate object is the salvation of souls, but it can not work out that end without elevating every faculty of human life, it can not regenerate individual souls without regenerating society. Wherever the religious man passes, on his way to eternity, religion passes with him and influences his action. For fifteen hundred years the prevailing idea that filled men's minds in governing and obeying, in business as in religion, was that Jesus the Son of God has died to save us, that we must love all men for His sake, that this life is temporary, and that our chief duty is to save our souls. It was under the influence of these ideas that the civilization we now enjoy grew up. Thus "the stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner" (Ps. cxvii, 22). The religion which was too spiritual and too austere and too wide for the carnal, narrow-minded Jews, has given birth to all the advantages which our civilization contains. The Gentiles, who expected to receive only the kingdom of God and the justice thereof, found that all other things were added to them. So it was that Solomon asked

only wisdom from the Lord, and was endowed also with wealth and power and glory beyond all the kings who went before him or followed after him.

IV. When the Christian Church emerged from her cradle of persecution and girded herself for her work, she found that her inheritance was a world in ruins. Everything had decayed. Religion, both revealed and natural, all virtue and morality, political and domestic life, every bond that bound man to man. Corruption of all kind prevailed, selfishness, cruelty, uncleanness. The whole world, pagan and Jewish, was groaning with anguish and looking for the coming of some divine power to renew all things; but men would not recognize their deliverer in the person of the Christian Church, and kept her in bondage for well nigh three centuries. Then came the torrent of pagan barbarism from north and east, which completed the destruction with fire and sword. Vandals and Goths, Huns and Saxons, Lombards and Arabs broke up the great empire of Rome into fragments, and then struggled till they founded kingdoms for themselves. Then Europe recommenced afresh. The Church proceeded to create order out of choas. She first converted the barbarians, then helped them to organize governments and make laws; by degrees she abolished slavery and serfdom, and established liberty and equality. It was through the bishops that the Magna Charta was won in England, and the Fueros, or local liberties, in Spain. In the struggles for political rights the Church was always the defender of the weak and disinherited. The Popes were recognized as arbiters and peacemakers of Europe, and their authority often restrained ambitious states, protected weak ones, settled conflicting claims, averted or intervened in wars, saved immense bloodshed and prevented stagnation and retrogression. The codes of law that prevail in Europe to this day were drawn up from the Roman law and the Canon Law of the Church. Cruel and immoral kings were restrained and taught their duties to their subjects; and the subjects in turn were taught the duty of obedience, together with the sense of their own dignity and their rights. The religious orders founded their convents in the wildest spots, cleared the forests, drained the marshes, imported new plants and animals, gathered the peasants about them into villages to protect them from the robber-barons, and trained them to agriculture. More especially they taught the lesson that poverty was honorable, that there was dignity in labor, and that there were other pursuits

besides killing and being killed that were worthy of the attention of men. The labor of cities was organized in the guilds of religious confraternities and the balance held fairly between master and man, between supply and demand. The poor were cared for by the monasteries or special asylums; their state was declared to be holy, to have its rights, and to be honorable though receiving charity. The Church re-established learning at a time when men respected only brute force. She founded schools and universities everywhere, offered education to all, selected the most promising students from every rank and opened great careers before them. She also created art in all its branches, painting, sculpture, architecture, music; supplying inspiration to them from her doctrines and consecrating them in her worship. It must suffice to say that every science—geography and history, literature and philosophy, medicine and astronomy owes its original creation and much of its present advancement to the encouragement of Roman Pontiffs and the labors of monks and priests. At the same time the moral character of Christendom was formed. The universal fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of all men were set forth. The figure of the Virgin Mother of God was placed before women who had been degraded by paganism, and they saw in her the sweet ideal of purity for the Christian maiden, and of dignity for the Christian wife. From faith and charity were developed unselfishness, generosity, self-sacrifice, obedience, respect, courtesy, honesty, truth, courage, endurance, resignation, and all those virtues which dignify man and give cohesion to societies. Thus did Christianity continue steadily for centuries, slowly building up a multifarious civilization, through many vicissitudes of persecution and opposition, calamities and scandals, meeting every need, relieving every burden, anticipating every danger. She was the light of all darkness, the cure of all evils, the starting point of all progress, the creator of modern Europe. Her work succeeded gloriously because the house she built was built by the Lord, and the city which she kept was guarded by the Lord. The life which Christianity infused into the social system and into civilization was not natural merely, but it was supernatural life from God, vigorous, wholesome, progressive and permanent.

A religious idea seems, then, to be a necessary factor in starting a civilization. Our civilization certainly was originated and molded, and is now characterized, by the Christian idea. The principles

which rule the origin, rule also the existence of a thing; its life depends on the maintenance of these principles. Christianity and European civilization are, therefore, so bound together that they can not be separated. You can not change the foundation of the social edifice without destroying it. Religion may indeed be uprooted in separate countries, or perhaps even in the whole society of the western world, as it has already perished in various places; but with it the whole structure of society and of civilization must fall. The general character of a community, and its vitality even, depend on some great idea or group of ideas that has taken root in the hearts of its members and spread through all the channels of their life; such, for instance, as the idea of independence or the call to a career of conquest. If that idea fails, all the action and all the qualities that proceeded from it will fail, and the nation itself will languish and wither. The Christian faith, Christian models, and Christian virtues, have entered into all our laws, customs, aspirations, language; they have originated all these habits of mind which have raised us to our present elevation. If the source of all this should be cut off, then the qualities resulting from it will fail, and all that we have achieved by them during so many centuries will be lost. The material part might indeed remain, wealth and the means of amassing it, but all that belongs to the higher life of man, and that conduces to contentment, peace, good order, nobleness and happiness, would certainly disappear; and society would grow corrupt, wallow in the most disgraceful vices, and become a hell upon earth, like the old pagan society of Rome just before the dawn of Christianity. The words of Our Lord apply, not only to those who cast Him forth from their religious life, but also to those who would destroy the divine element out of social life: "He that abideth in me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without me you can do nothing. If anyone abide not in me, he shall be cast forth as a branch, and shall wither, and they shall gather him up, and cast him into the fire" (John xv, 5, 6).

V. To sever the branch from the vine, to cut off the influx of divine life into civilization by destroying Christianity is the object of a large, powerful, unscrupulous body of men. They wish to emancipate the mind from the tutelage of faith, the conduct from the restraints of virtue, and to cast off that which, although easy and light, is still a yoke and a burden to them. Blind ministers of Satan, they seek to destroy the action of God in society, and so

would destroy society itself, by substituting the spirit of the flesh, the spirit of worldlings, and the spirit of the devil, for the spirit of goodness, of justice, and of truth. They speak indeed of liberty, of enlightenment, of happiness, but their moving principles are pride, lust, hatred of God and of His Son Jesus Christ. They forget that Christianity has elevated every department of human life, and provided for all the wants of a growing society; they turn round upon her to rend her for being their mother. They denounce the domination of Christianity as a usurpation, its guidance as a slavery, its enlightenment as darkness; and, like the Jews, they will not allow a supernatural king to reign over their natural life. They will accept indeed the gifts with which Christianity has endowed them, but they will henceforth go their own way, trusting to human powers alone. If ever they should succeed in their purpose they will find, not that they have improved and elevated civilization, nor that they have changed its principles and its foundation, but that they have destroyed it. "Unless the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it"; and any edifice of human society commenced without God, and in opposition to God, will be only another Tower of Babel, and will end, like that attempt, in the confusion and dispersion of its builders.

God has not made known to us the secrets of the future; we can not foresee the issue of this war against Christian civilization. Of this we are absolutely certain, that Christianity is immortal, because Jesus Christ is with it all days, even to the end of the world; and the gates of hell, therefore, shall never prevail against it. Still, the light of Christianity may be extinguished in this or that country which has proved unworthy to retain it, and indeed it generally happens that a gradually increasing unworthiness grows at last into a complete unworthiness. So it was with the Jews. As Israel was too far gone to receive the new, austere, sublime religion of the Messias, as the Roman society was too corrupted to be renewed again to penance and to life; as both rejected Jesus Christ and were swept away, and their privileges given to other nations producing the fruits thereof; so it may be with this generation. However this be, Christianity is a living force, she has a special power for creating and guiding civilization; that power will not be frustrated, it must have its scope. The great ideas embodied in Christianity will energize in the minds and hearts of some, will spread abroad, and transform the multitudes of men. Whether they will do this work

upon the old society, or on a fresh, youthful one, replacing the old, we can not say. Perhaps the old society may yet be renewed unto penance and return like the prodigal; but if it will not admit the divine life, it must, like all human and natural things, corrupt and die. In any case a reorganization of human society will be necessary and the Church of Christ alone is capable of it. When the horn sounds she will gird her loins once more, and go forth to renew the face of the earth, regenerating it by the Gospel, and creating a new, and perhaps a higher, civilization.

LII. CATHOLICS THE SALT OF THE EARTH.

BY THE RIGHT REV. JAMES BELLORD, D.D.

"You are the salt of the earth."—Matt. v. 13.

SYNOPSIS.—All Christians are placed by God among their fellowmen to be the salt of the earth.

I. Their duty is to influence, penetrate, preserve from putrefaction the world, and to impart to it the savor of Christ.

II. Though small in numbers comparatively, the Church is yet powerful enough to do her great work. More powerful even because of her littleness, she is always stronger and more vigorous in times of persecution. The work the Church has done as a leavener.

III. The duty before us at the present time. The wicked, degraded state of society. Our duty to enlighten and elevate, to proclaim the power of Christ and of His religion. No one too small, too weak for the work. God always uses the weak. The work of the weak in nature. So likewise in the Church, courage, good will, prayer and sacrifice needed. Success sure to crown our efforts.

These words of Our Lord define a great power which His followers possess, and consequently a great duty, that of using this power. We might suppose that this power and duty belong exclusively to the Apostles, who were the messengers and representatives of Christ, depositories of His authority, commissioned to convert the world and rule it spiritually. But this word was not spoken to the Apostles alone; it is part of the Sermon on the Mount, a public discourse in which the principles of the Christian Church were laid down for the guidance of all its members. To all and to each of us Our Lord has said: "You are the salt of the earth." Let us consider His meaning and the obligation He lays upon us.

I. Salt is a very important element of food. It must be used with all other kinds of food, both animal and vegetable. It is necessary for the healthiness of food, it preserves it from corruption, seasons it, destroys insipidity, draws out its flavor. Sweet things may be more pleasant, but they are not so necessary or so wholesome; and they, too, though opposed in character to salt, require to be seasoned with it. This is the function of Christ's followers in the world, to influence it, and penetrate it by their example, to check putrefaction, to season it by imparting the good savor of Jesus Christ. It is the function, not of the Church only in its corporate

capacity, but of each individual acting separately, according to the talents and vocation that God has given him.

Salt is a thing that is necessarily used in small quantities to produce its due effect. The amount used is quite out of proportion to the amount of other substances which it affects; it is sometimes almost imperceptible. In like manner the Church is a small body, a little flock among the multitudes who are in opposition to Christ. This is one of its qualities as laid down by our blessed Lord, a quality that it possesses at all times. When we look back to other ages, or abroad to other lands, we find localities where the spirit of true Christianity is predominant and actuates the whole community, we learn of times when divisions in faith were unknown, and all Christendom acknowledged one sole religious authority. Yet even then, while the Church was great and omnipresent, there was a true sense in which it was small. When the proportion of its adherents was largest the Church had perhaps a greater proportion of enemies; and those were the more dangerous because they were enemies in the household. Many, while nominally members of the one fold, were really ravening wolves, false friends, whose attachment to religion was no more than the hope of growing fat upon its spoils. They were in the Church, but not of it, belonging to it by the mere accident of birth, possessing a weak faith that never bore fruits in devotion, or obedience, or virtue; plague-spots of corruption, sources of horrible scandal, the worst enemies of Christianity. Under other circumstances these men would have ranged themselves as open enemies of the Church in some form of schism, or heresy, or infidelity.

This being the case, it is for the advantage of the Church that her numbers be small, that she be really the *little* flock of Jesus Christ. This, perhaps, is one of the chief conditions of her success appointed by Our Lord. It is a great weakness to an army to be encumbered with a number of camp followers, who help to consume the provisions, lend no aid in battle, and embarrass the movements of the troops. It is next thing to fatal when a considerable part of the army consists of unfaithful allies, who are prepared to turn their arms against their own side and go over to the enemy in the heat of action. In such cases the largeness of a military force contributes to its defeat. The smallness of an army in a hostile country implies concentration of energy, greater watchfulness, stronger resolution, which add to the chances of success.

Times of misfortune are just the times when the Church renews her strength and prepares herself for fresh conquests. When she is cut down to narrow limits, oppressed and unpopular, when she is struggling for her primary rights, or perhaps for existence, then she offers no attraction to the worldly wise, to self-seekers, to cowards, to the insincere; such men will drop away, and the loss of them is a purification and a gain in strength. Those who remain will be such as have chosen their lot deliberately and not fallen into it by accident; they will be staunch, courageous, earnest, ready to face all opposition and to suffer all things for their convictions. The Church, like the vine, is periodically pruned down, almost, as it would seem, to destruction; and the result is, that she is prevented from running into an abundance of useless wood, and brings forth a greater harvest of luscious, fragrant grapes.

Such times are times of special fervor and prayer, and so, of the accumulation of supernatural strength. They are times of edification, of glory for the Church; for the qualities which shine in her and are taken by men as her characteristics, are, not the vices of her disobedient and nominal subjects, but the splendid virtues which her real teaching engenders in faithful souls. The days which glow with greatest brilliance in the annals of religion, which stir our spirits and touch our hearts, are the days of persecution and smallness of the Church, as in Rome of old, in Ireland, in China, in the Germany and France of to-day.

If, then, we find ourselves a little flock in the world at large, in our particular country, or in the locality that surrounds our homes, let this not be an obstacle to our efforts, or a discouragement. If we are more marked, we shall have the more influence; if we really make ourselves by holiness the salt of the earth, the small quantity of this salt will be sufficient to do the work desired by God in the midst of the great mass of other material.

II. Salt is exceedingly penetrating; a small quantity seasons a large amount of food. In this quality it resembles the leaven, also used as a comparison by Our Lord, which is hidden in the midst of three measures of meal and leavens the whole. The smallness of the Church is the cause of its having such a power of penetration. That same power resides in each one of us. A good Catholic life, formed by divine grace and acting through prayer and good example, should be one of the most potent influences for good among the masses of mankind; and there is no reason outside a man's own

free will why he should not, in his own special way, lead such a life.

It is wonderful what one man can do against the world. Without counting these few men of astonishing genius who have started some new idea, persevered till they have impressed it on their generation, and inaugurated gigantic changes; without speaking of the saints, whose personality by God's grace has been so strong as to form the characters of thousands during the course of twenty generations, we may contemplate with wonder the humbler influence which Catholics of holy life have exerted on their surroundings. An influence of this kind is within the power of every man. A distinct belief, strong convictions, perseverance in doing good by every means that comes to hand, fearlessness, readiness to suffer for what is right, these are not too much to expect from every Catholic, considering the nature of his faith and the efficacy of the Sacraments; and these are the greatest forces in the universe. Any cause ought to prosper in the hands of such men as Catholics ought to be; the best of causes would fail if it were in the hands of such timid, selfish, time-serving men as many Catholics actually are. Those who take their opinions from religious men and newspapers, who wish to be like other men, who will not do more than they are bound to do, who are fearful of giving offence, who will not risk anything in God's cause, such are not the salt of the earth; they will do no good work in the world. Yet such as these are numerous, they even constitute a very large proportion of certain communities.

In the early days the wonderful progress of Christianity was due in a very important degree to the action of individual private Christians. They were few, they were vigorous, and they prevailed. Each man was an Apostle, each set himself resolutely against the prevailing error of his times, idolatry. They would make no terms with it, they spoke against it, they separated themselves from it, though this involved their segregation from the dignities, pleasures and careers of their fellow citizens, and almost from the life of the world. They struggled, asserted themselves and died; but they moved the admiration of mankind by their heroism, and won them by their gentle charity. Their ideas were adopted by degrees, the faith advanced, and at the end of three centuries the Roman Empire was subdued to Christ. A passage of Seneca about the Jews, quoted by St. Augustine, aptly describes the successful struggle of the early Christians. "To such an extent has the custom of life of this

most villainous race prevailed that it has come to be recognized all over the world: the vanquished have imposed their laws on the victors."

In the same way is the Church of Christ advancing at this present day. About a hundred years ago it seemed to be at the last gasp. History and science, legislation and learning, calumny and ridicule, directed their powers to its destruction. In certain countries the same process is still going on with considerable success. But see in other places how the tide has turned. The "most villainous race," as it used to be considered, has gained the widest respect. It has lived down prejudice, reformed persecuting laws, refuted falsehoods, converted innumerable opponents. Put together the admissions and the praises extorted from its enemies, and they will form a complete defense of the whole system of Catholic life and practice. Catholic ideas have been by turns rejected with scorn, then reconsidered, tolerated, and at last widely adopted. There is hardly a form of modern religion, from the crudest and lowest imitation of Christianity up to those that now claim our name and aspire to equal brotherhood with us, which does not bear visible marks of the influence of Catholic models. This result has been brought about, not by the united body of all Catholics (for very many have done more toward preventing than forwarding it), not by a few men of towering genius, but by the writings, the conversation, the good works, the example, the prayers of the many fervent ones scattered here and there like particles of salt gradually seasoning the whole mass.

III. 1. Let us now look at the task that stands before ourselves. We are a few in the midst of an alien world. Its multitudes are sunk in materialism, grossness, folly, in the deepest ignorance of all that is spiritual and divine. They are full of malice and prejudice, abandoned to greed and sensuality and conceit in themselves; their principles are evil, their views are low; the nobler virtues are unknown to them; such goodness as they have is merely natural, imperfect, or wrongly directed. "The whole world," as St. John says and our observation witnesses, "is seated in wickedness" (I John v, 19). From this origin proceed all these horrible evils which ravage humanity—misery and crime, the disorganization of commerce and wealth and government, social discords, and moral putrefaction.

We, the members of Christ's one true Church, have the high duty,

which we should not leave to others, of leavening and gradually changing all this. We, a few scattered units or communities few in comparison with the great bulk of the world, of no account, despised and suspected and hated, with small resources and little influence, we have to do this great work. Those who have their daily occupations to attend to, their bread-winning and the cares of others, who are not professional teachers or apostles, whose lives are spent in their own homes or in places of business, they all are required by God to be the salt of the earth. Few and weak, they are what God requires for His purposes. It is now as it was in the early days and ever since: "Not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but the foolish things of this world hath God chosen that he may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen that he may confound the strong" (I Cor. i, 26, 27).

To such is committed the task of infusing into the seething mass of corruption the germs of new life, of making healthy what is unsound, of stopping the advance of putrefaction, of sweetening and preserving. Theirs is the task of enlightening and elevating the dark, mean lives of others; theirs to give an example of high principles and constancy in carrying them out, to place a higher ideal before men, and show the possibilities that are open to those who have good will and God's grace. They have to draw men first to admire and then to practise truth, honesty, purity, unselfishness, devotedness and religion; and to show how passions can be restrained and Christ manifested in our mortal bodies; and through these means they have to try and remedy the ills of society, to right its wrongs, and promote justice and charity.

2. Does this seem too great a work for you to do? Do you think yourselves too small, too weak, too much occupied, too little endowed for so important a duty? Remember the concentrated power there is in each grain of salt; remember the great effects produced by a multitude of small causes working together and continuously.

Do not say that you have no opportunities, that your deficiencies are too great, that your position precludes you from doing what you would wish. Have you tried to do some good? Have you asked God to show you a work to do? Are you ready to sacrifice yourself in His service? You can not expect an employer of labor to assign you a task and direct you, unless you first offer yourself to him.

Do not disbelieve in your efficiency because you can not show tangible results from it to-day or to-morrow. The work of God takes time, it develops slowly and unseen. Who can measure one day's growth of a gigantic tree, one of the forest monarchs? Yet every hour of sunshine, every single dewdrop has added something to its life during five hundred years. Who can trace what each man has contributed to the slow advance of those great ideas which rise imperceptibly and at last take possession of mankind? It is by such slow degrees that the Church of Christ has gained all its victories.

Do not think you are useless because you can not do what God's great champions have done in His cause, or because you have not the chances that this or that man has. Every man's task is different, each has to serve God in his own particular way; and there is something for you to do, whatever be your position or your deficiencies.

You may say that you can do but little. That is precisely what is wanted. Those who can do but little are the great strength of every cause. All nature shows us the power of the infinitely little. The small, yielding particles of invisible air are the same that work the terrible devastation of the cyclone; the small insects in the coral have built up islands and mountains from the depths of the ocean. The great works of men's hands, roads, and mines, and canals, and cities, are the result of so many infinitesimal muscular exertions in countless numbers, organized and duly directed by a few.

So it is with God's work on earth through His Church, the spiritual work in souls and the social work in men's outward lives. Every one of God's faithful followers has his share in it; each one's part is very minute, but the general result is exceedingly great. We have in our hands all the elements of success. Our Church may be small and weak in places, but it is widely diffused through the whole earth, and it is highly organized for action. We have the strength that comes from unity, being bound together in one unvarying, unfailing faith. We have the strength that comes from earnest convictions, possessing as we do an absolute confidence in our infallible guide, and certainty as to the truth, and rectitude, and ultimate success of its teachings. And above all this, we have the presence and the aid of God, who is in us and fights with us. One thing remains only to be supplied on our side, a courageous and persevering good will. Under these conditions we are bound to succeed if we only

try. If ever there has been failure, in any country, or at any epoch, it is because Catholics have not been true to themselves and to God.

Prove yourselves, then, to be the salt of the earth, and labor indefatigably at the work which in consequence devolves upon you. Be staunch to your principles, have the courage of your convictions, leave no good undone which comes in your way and demands your efforts, fear no consequences. Advance your holy religion in every way you can, obey its teachings rigidly, never be ashamed of it. Seek out some work to do for God, try every day to carry it out, endeavor to influence for good every one you come across. Above all, pray fervently to God, and invoke the most powerful intercession of the Blessed Virgin and the saints. So will your days be full days, and your lives will be widely useful; you will be a power for good in the world; and whether you see your success before your death or see it not, you can not fail of contributing greatly toward building up the kingdom of God.

LIII. LOYALTY TO THE CHURCH.

BY THE REV. P A. HALPIN.

SYNOPSIS.—The need of Catholic loyalty to-day.

I. Loyalty to the Church is a duty. Meaning of loyalty in its sense of mind and will and life devotion to the Church. Why a duty and among duties the greatest.

II. Want of loyalty is cowardice. How and why.

III. Want of loyalty is essentially criminal.

Introductory.—Loyalty to the Church! Perhaps now more than ever, certainly now as much as ever, does the Catholic need to be warned that temptations to disloyalty are many and violent, and that more harm is worked against not only his individual faith, but against the faith at large, by this defect, which, be it either trifling or extreme or apparent or real, pushes its victim not only near but in so many lamentable cases over the precipice of infidelity. Where loyalty is a virtue and a duty, and the fulfilment of it dearly to be cherished, disloyalty is cowardice, a crime and the beginning of many spiritual disasters. It is proposed in this sermon to show that loyalty is a duty, that disloyalty is cowardice, that it is a crime.

I. Loyalty to the Church is a duty. The natural reasoning of the mind as well as the voice of religion proclaims this. We call duty that obligation which can not be evaded without going counter to principles which we know are absolute, without opposing laws which are founded in justice and emanate from a superior with the right to command. That loyalty to Mother Church falls into the class of primal duties is evidenced by a mere statement of its meaning. In general what is understood by the expression loyalty? It is a man's attitude toward a being who has claims upon him which may not be questioned, or toward an institution of which he is a member and to which he is pledged by ties which call for love and gratitude and courage and protection. That being may be God or it may be man. That institution may be his family, his country, his Church. So peculiar is the organization of his Church that it is the family, the country, the home of his soul. Just as soul transcends body, just as spirit is above matter, just as eternity is more than

time, so do his religious ties assume a value and an importance far above any which can attach to the things of country or family or friends.

When, then, loyalty to Church is spoken of there rises in our conceptions the notion of a fidelity which is greater than we owe to any one else, than we owe even to our fireside or our native or adopted land. This is claiming much, but not more than reason or justice may allow. What do we owe to our land or our home? In the first place compliance with all the laws that regulate both. There is the law of obedience to superiors, the law of charity toward our equals. If one or other call for a sacrifice, we are to make it. If one or other call for protection, we are to give it. As for others, they must not invade home or country. We are to repel in the moment of danger all that assails rights or privileges belonging to either. If a moment strikes when the jeopardizing of our lives becomes a necessity we are to be found at our posts no matter how fraught with danger. We must carry them in our thoughts and our affections. We must throw no discredit by the conduct of our lives on their fair name. Their reputation must be as dear to us as our own, and their existence must we cherish as we cherish the individual life which is ours. This every man claims to be the reasonable position of all who do not wish to be accused of perfidy or cowardice or crime.

Now has our church the right to our loyalty, which nature makes compulsory where there is question of fireside and native land? It would seem that the Church has this right. What does the Church do for us that puts her on a level with the time-honored institutions of home and country? She does more for us than country or home has done or could do. Her origin is divine. She came from the hands of God through His Christ, dowered with a more than queenly inheritance. Her mission is to thrall the generations of men. She came when mankind was in a welter of darkness and passion. She came to perform a task which was to uplift him from the slough of debasement and to light up a path which was to lead him to higher and better things. She was to create him anew, not changing but strengthening his nature, and to stand by his side from the moment of his birth until that of his death, ministering to all his spiritual wants, watching over him until life's little hour was over and the unending day of eternity began. It was no empty mission.

It is written in history, it is inscribed in the hearts of men that she brought with her choicest gifts and blessings so priceless that without them life would have no meaning, would not be worth the living. She has been, she *is* the civilizer of the world, and so she will continue until the end, for Christ will be with her unto the end of time. What does she not do for each one of us individually? for our minds? for our hearts?

Truth is the richest possession of human intelligence, and the higher the bearings of the truth bequeathed to it the more opulent becomes the inheritance. There are three things concerning which every thinking mind is anxious, and about which it would be at rest. Man clamors to know whence he came, whither he is going and by what road he is to travel. Your Church has left no doubt in your minds about these momentous questions. You are from God. She tells you in tones which carry conviction, you are from God. Your origin is divine, and so is your destiny and the path thither is clearly defined. The mind thus illumined, there remains the heart to be influenced. She teaches the heart what it must love and what it must hate. She directs the affections toward all that is high and immortal. She turns all the hates of humanity against what is unrighteous, ignoble and empty.

It is in this way she ennobles character and fashions men and women into beings who challenge the admiration of time and of the race. In her sacramental arms she enfolds her children, regenerating and purifying and strengthening them for all the tasks of life. She holds them fast in their dying hour, peacefully closes their weary eyes until they open on the vision which the eye has never seen, whose music the ear has never heard and which it has not entered the mind of man to conceive. She has open arms and a healing embrace for all the prodigals of humanity. There is magic in her touch and in the elevation of the individual she uplifts the entire human family.

What do all these benefactions poured so lavishly on all who are desirous of them, but lay the basis of a claim which compels unselfish loyalty and devotion. From the beginning there has been nothing but execration for the ungrateful child or the recreant citizen. No crimes are written so deeply and darkly in the annals of the world as those committed when the child unnaturally turns against the parent or when the soldier flings away his colors or plots for the dishonor or destruction of his native land. Yet the Church has

done more than mother or father for her children—more than country could ever do. If there be an unwritten law against matricide and treason there is an universally accepted law against disloyalty to Mother Church. The very divinity of her origin, the unequaled martyrdom of her Founder, the tenderness of her love and the strength of her protection, all these proclaim that it is a duty, primal and highest, to be loyal and devoted Catholics.

Having established this point there remains to consider wherein this loyalty consists. We understand that loyalty is fidelity. Here this fidelity means being true to the Church, which is identical with saying being true to God. It means, therefore, a surrender of everything within us to which the Church lays claim. It means a surrender of all that we have and are—a surrender of our minds and of our liberty. It means loyalty of our reason, of our will, of our life.

Loyalty of reason. This great prerogative, which distinguishes us so clearly from the mere animal, becomes sometimes the fiercest antagonist of faith. We pride ourselves upon our reason, and in this pride we rebel against whatever seems to contradict it. Our reason, we feel prompted to say, is a sufficient guide for us. It is all sufficing, is the loudest cry of the rationalist. It is not necessary to pause in order to point out how this so-called principle, that the unaided mind is potent enough to direct man in the labyrinth of existence, has been a fatal one. Let us consult our own experience, let us advert to the experience of the past, and from reflection will emerge the ever patent fact that man is a finite being and that his reason has its limitations just as numerous and just as humiliating as any of his other faculties. Loyalty of mind binds us to repudiate energetically every thought, every view, every opinion, every judgment that is not in harmony with the teaching of the Church.

One thing we know, we have erred. Another thing is just as positive, the Church can not err. Mind loyalty will run to earth and annihilate every doubt. We must not think, we must not admit for one voluntary second, even a suspicion, concerning the doctrines of the Church. This is loyalty of reason in its fullest expression. Its chastity is so sensitive that even a doubt sullies its whiteness.

Loyalty of mind is the most needed nowadays. It is the cornerstone of perfect allegiance. Have we the mental grasp of a St. Paul? Yet he exclaimed: "Though we or an angel from heaven preached a gospel to you besides that which we have preached to

you, let him be anathema." Is ours the intellectual acumen of an Augustine? Yet he declared that he would not believe in the Scripture were it not for the authority of the Church. Throughout history we encounter men of vast understanding and rich and varied erudition compelling their reason to its knees in presence of the infallible utterances of Mother Church. A writer whose pen has helped much to portray to the world the glories of the Catholic faith does not hesitate to affirm that among the proofs of her divinity not the weakest is that drawn from the number of great minds which the unity of the Church's doctrines has always inclosed within her bosom. For eighteen hundred years there has been an uninterrupted chain of learned men who were Catholics. "I see the illustrious race still continue throughout the calamities of the eighteenth century, and in the nineteenth I see fresh heroes, who after having followed errors in all directions come to hang their trophies at the gates of the Catholic Church. What, then, is this prodigy? Has a sect or a religion like it ever before been seen? These men study everything, dispute on everything, reply to everything, know everything, but always agreeing in unity of doctrine they bend their noble and intellectual brows in respectful obedience to faith. Do we not seem to behold another planetary system, where globes of fire revolve on their vast orbits in the midst of immensity, always drawn to their center by a mysterious attraction? That central force which allows no aberration, takes from them nothing of their extent or of the grandeur of their movement, but it inundates them with light while giving to their motion a more majestic regularity."

What have we pigmies to allege as excuse for our doubts or insinuations, perhaps our denials, when confronted by the acquiescence of men of such intellectual stature? While this faith loyalty is not all of which true fealty to Mother Church is compacted, it takes the initiative, and without it the whole edifice totters. If we do not believe with the Church, then, all loyalty is out of the question. This is too elementary to call for elucidation. If I do not believe I can not worship or love or obey.

Man has another faculty which must be impregnated with this spirit of loyalty. Man's will, just as everything in man, must be swayed by the authority of the Church. Man must not only think, but must also will as his faith dictates. Not his mind only must he bend, but his knees as well. The religion which he professes is not a theoretical one. Mere theory is not religion. Religion must

be practical. It must show him how to act. How noble faith is when applied to the exigencies of human every-day action, how elevating it is in its effects upon all man's relations toward himself, toward his neighbor and toward God is the most luminous characteristic of your faith.

Can you conceive character more sublimely fashioned than that which is molded by the tenets of your Church? What men, what women have moved on such a high plane as those whom your religion has placed upon our altars? Besides the saints, whose halo is visible, how innumerable is the army of hidden heroes who since the day of the Resurrection have followed in the footsteps of Catholic teaching. A living monstrosity is he who believes that holiness is the best gift of the Church, who knows how holiness is generated and sustained, yet prefers to walk on lower levels where the spirit of man dies and the passions hold fierce sway. Such an one is a contradiction, set up for his own ruin and the ruin of many. Such an one is a misfit in the beautiful economy of the Church. Such an one is feeding on husks. Such an one is flinging a crown and a scepter and an inheritance away for a handful of dross, for a dream, for a nightmare. Can there be any love in his heart for the mother in whose embrace he professes to be held? Such a career is a career of disloyalty, harmful to himself and his Church. There is no Catholic loyalty without Catholic living. Such a man can not plead weakness, for his Church not only dictates the method of his life, but furnishes him with the means of ordering his ways as his Church dictates. Such disloyalty is traceable chiefly to perversity of will. How much he flings away. The whole realm of purity and honesty and honor is his for the willing of it, and he lets it slip from his holding. Yes, Catholic living is the sure test of Catholic loyalty. It appeals to what is best in the man, as it develops what is noblest. If the heathen of old was inexcusable because he refused worship to the one true God, how much more inexcusable the Catholic who refuses to shape his conduct and by unblemished integrity of his existence refuses to pay a rightful tribute to the omnipotent influence of his religion. This is our understanding of the loyalty which is every Catholic's bounden duty to manifest throughout the whole extent of his sojourn on earth.

II. Disloyalty has been stigmatized as cowardice and crime. There is a strain of cowardice in all dereliction of duty, no matter

how reckless the individual may be. There are cowards and cowards. The one most covered with the contempt and ridicule of men is the moral coward, for the simple reason that for such degeneracy he has himself alone to blame. He shrinks from the open profession of his creed because he is not brave enough to face the senseless opinions of his fellows. His cowardice is that of a false shame which arises from the most inexcusable kind of ignorance. His Church is the depository of divine truth, it is gifted with inerrancy in matters of doctrine and morals, it is the bulwark of private and public integrity, it is the grandest and most beneficent visitant which this world has ever glimpsed, its history is ablaze with luminous and marvelous deeds, springing from a purity, an honesty, a spirit of self-sacrifice, a spirit of missionary zeal which have startled all the generations of men in modern times. It is the glory of humanity.

The denial, therefore, of membership in such a religion is a bartering away of what is splendid and noble through fear of a cynical smile or a scoffing sneer or an ignorant jeer, and must certainly be stamped as an act of servility, as a cringing to what is worthless, as a poltroonry which deserves only pity and scorn. Base, indeed, is the son who through intimidation of any kind repudiates the mother, whose tenderness toward her children has never been surpassed or equaled. Instead of the blush of shame mounting your cheeks for that you are Catholics, it should be your proudest pride to be numbered among her adherents—a privilege which you should glory in with an enthusiasm and a gladness above every other enthusiasm and gladness.

One only attitude can you assume toward your Church, the attitude of a loyalty which will make your life so grand that no thought, no word, no action of yours shall ever bow her head in shame for that you are one of her children. Yours should be a loyalty that would suppress every tendency to lose courage in the fight which you are called upon to make with her against the world, the devil and the flesh. Suppress every tendency which should weaken your determination to make every sacrifice in her behalf—yes, every sacrifice, even the sacrifice of life itself.

III. That loyalty is a virtue, the fulfilment of a God-given duty is clear. Clear, too, is it that the cowardice which impels you to refuse an open profession of your faith when called upon to do so, is flagitious and unpardonable, because such dis-

loyalty is a sin, amenable to condemnation here and hereafter. Most assuredly disloyalty is a crime which finds itself by its very nature in the category of the most heinous offenses. Disloyalty to your faith is disloyalty to God and to His Christ. As a crime it has all the blackness of ingratitude. As a crime it is a sin against the Holy Spirit—a sin against all the inspirations of heaven—a sin against the light—an impugning of the known truth. It may not in every case be all this, but beyond a doubt, no matter how trifling the repudiation may be, if there be anything trifling in these matters, it implies them all—it certainly leads to them all. Every sin bears in its bosom the spirit of rebellion against the Creator: this one sin is rebellion carried to the excess of treason. The criminal essence of disloyalty is so evident that argument is unnecessary. So criminal is it that it is branded by a special condemnation. It is the one sin that is punished by a counter repudiation on the part of the Christ, the plenipotentiary of the Father, who will deny before that Father all who have refused to confess Him before men. It follows, as the day the night, that it is incumbent on us to study our attitude toward the Church. It is well for us to judge ourselves—to ask ourselves some questions which are very pertinent.

Is our attitude one of loyalty and devotion? Is our faith the highest in our thoughts and deepest in our hearts. It has created a standard of living. Are our lives being shaped accordingly? Is our morality derived from the inspirations of that faith? Are our thoughts thought, our judgments framed, our words uttered, our actions performed in consonance with its teachings? Have we tutored our wills to accept readily and unconditionally all the truths it proposes for our acceptance. Are we proud of our religion? Is it as much to us, or rather is it more to us than home or country? Is it in our eyes our chiefest possession? This examination of conscience will reveal to us our position. Is there any need of exhortation? Should it be necessary to remind you of what value your faith is to you? Should it be needful to ask you to be loyal to your Church, when that loyalty means loyalty to yourself and to your best and most momentous and most lasting interests?

Be loyal to your Church, and you will be faithful to your home and your native land and to all the ties which bind you to your fellowmen. Out of our loyalty will be begotten gratitude, enthusiasm, courage, self-conquest, humility and all the virtues which

make for peace and happiness and devotion and good will to all. Useless to tell you that the measure of your loyalty to your Church is the measure of your Church's loyalty to you—a loyalty which is the tenderest affection watching over you in all the vicissitudes of life and smoothing your death pillow, and lighting up the grave and opening the gates of Paradise.